

LITTELL'S LIVING AGE.

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NEW BOOKS:

POEMS by DANTE GABRIEL ROSSETTI. Boston: Roberts Bros. 1870.

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FLOWER-VOICES.

Δίμα ρόδον τίκτει, τὰ δὲ δάκρυα τὸν ἀνεμόναν.

" You flowers that rich in bright and golden
hue

Embroider all the earth's enamelled green
(So hung aloft in boundless depth of blue,
The starry lustres of the night are seen),

" Speak, ruddy roses, beauties of the grove,
You lilies speak, with bells of silver tongue,
And sing again the songs of peace and love
Which once in happy Eden's vale you sung."

O then there came a far-responsive ring
From woodland, upland knoll, and leafy dell,
So sad and sweet, as nightingales might sing,
Or low and booming peals each distant bell.

" The song of joy and peace we sing no more
Which angel voices warbled o'er us then;
Our banishment and yours we must deplore,
And sadly weep with you, ye sons of men.

" For drops of blood bedew with red the rose,
And falling tears the lily's chalice fill;
While melancholy pipes the wind that blows,
And sighs in unison the rushing rill.

" Though Solomon, in all his glory clad,
Was not so fair as is our bright array,
The mottoes on our painted leaves are sad,
And sorrow is the burthen of our lay.

" We are but emblems of the path of pain
Which since the sin of Adam men have trod;
We hope to tell of joy and peace again
When we, and they again, shall be with God."

T. M.

OLD MEMORIES.

As she walked through the lonely street,
Old memories breathed from each stone;
She could hear the sound of *their* feet,
Although she was walking alone.

Some footsteps were short and some long,
But all keeping pace with her own;
And she heard the refrain of a song,
Yet still she was walking alone.

At the corner she made a stand,
And waited for half a minute;
She could almost have sworn that a hand
Was holding hers tightly in it.

And she felt on her lips a kiss,
That was given her years ago;
Then she murmured — " Ah! why is this'
When I came through the street alone?"

Good Words.

J. P. W.

A MORNING PICTURE.

The Morning opens like a rose,
The Eastern skies are faintly flushed,
While all the West is filled with clouds,
Where late the last sweet evening blushed.
No sparkles from the dewdrops come;
A fleece-like mist hangs o'er the vale;
The clouds as stately and as slow
As ships in some calm ocean sail !

The unsunned breeze is cool and fresh,
By tall woods winnowed till it dies;
And half across the placid pool
The massive oak-tree's shadow lies.
The lark now rises from his nest,
Soars heavenward till his form is dim :
Soon in a sea of sunlight lost
His notes with liquid freedom swim.

The flowers awake, and now dissolves
The mist that clung to wood and wold;
And all the clouds about the sun
Appear like hills of snow and gold.
Old earth is gay with light and dew,
The new morn gleaming on her breast;
While like a flaming jewel glides
The pauseless sun unto the West.

Athenaeum.

From The Sunday Magazine.

OUR STRENGTH AND SHIELD.

"Thou art near, O Lord." — PSALM cxix. 151.

LORD! to Thy grace the glory be,
That not in guilty fear,
But with the love which yearns to see,
We know that Thou art near.

Yea, Lord, for GOD WITH US Thou art,
In Jesus Christ Thy Son,
And by the Spirit in our heart
With Thee Thy Church is one.

And Thou art near us in our bliss,
And near in all our woe;
Our strength for toil and conflict this,
Our shield from every foe.

And Thou art near to come, O Lord :
Draws on the glorious Day :
The scoffer's scoff confirns Thy word :
Thou wilt not long delay.

Lord Jesus! speed the promised hour;
The veil, which hides Thee, rend;
And in the triumph of Thy power
With trump and shout descend!

Untrembling then, O grant us grace
The archangel's voice to hear;
Unfazzed to behold Thy face
In cloudless glory near.

HENRY DOWNTON.

From Blackwood's Magazine.
THE PRINCESSE DES URSINS.*

The dynasty of the Bourbons in Spain, which has just ended in a woman, was founded by a woman; for it was the Princesse des Ursins who was veritably Queen of Spain for the first fifteen years of their domination; and without the aid of her protection, courage, and indomitable spirit, the descendants of Philip V. would never have occupied the throne of Spain.

This extraordinary person has hitherto obtained too little consideration in the page of history. Writers, relying almost solely on the pages of St. Simon, have passed her by as a mere *intriguante*; but there was infinitely more than this in the Princesse des Ursins. She was the incarnate representative of the French spirit of progress in Spain, a female politician of the school of Richelieu and Colbert; she thoroughly understood by what means a stable government was to be secured for the country with which the peculiar circumstances of her early life had made her acquainted before the Bourbon accession; she had entirely comprehended by what measures bankrupt, beggarly, incapable Spain could be raised again in the scale of nations. The chief of these measures were the repression of the superb, punctilious, and factious spirit of the grandes, the reform in taxation and administration of the finances, the assimilation and centralization of the charter-system of provincial rights, privileges, and legislatures (the provincial *fueros*) which embarrassed the operations of government, and the suppression of ecclesiastic immunities in a country which was being yearly devoured by priests and monks. For the Spain which Charles II. had left behind him was a desert land, eaten up by grandes and churches and convents. After fifteen years of immense activity, Madame des Ursins, without a moment's warning, was forcibly seized in the middle of a horribly cold December night and carried out of Spain; but the greater part of the reforms she set on foot

ultimately took root; and if Spain under the Bourbons rose in the scale of nations, much of the credit is due to Madame des Ursins. Although her sudden fall was owing directly to the ordinary ingratitude of absolute monarchs, yet the inspiring primal causes were the machinations of the grandes whose authority she had curtailed, joined to the dark workings of the Inquisition. To the honour of Madame des Ursins she dared to proclaim herself the enemy of this abominable institution; and the first, a small but ultimately deadly wound, which their power received, came from the hand of a woman, and that of a woman of nearly eighty years of age.

For, strange to say, the historic career, the public life, of Madame des Ursins did not begin till she was sixty-five years old. Her long life may be divided into five portions — that of the handsome, brilliant, witty, and intelligent Mademoiselle de la Tremouille up to the age of twenty-two; that of the loving and devoted wife, the Princesse de Chalais, up to the death of her first husband, Adrien Blaise de Talleyrand, Prince de Chalais, in 1670, when she was thirty-five years of age; that of the great Duchesse de Bracciano, when she was the leader of fashion and of elegant amusements in the great Orsini palace in the Piazza Navona, at Rome, after her second marriage in 1675; that of the Princesse des Ursins, which title she took after the death of the Duke of Bracciano in 1698, when her diplomatic and political career first commenced; that of the ex-regent of Spain, during her second residence at Rome, from 1715 to 1722, where she died at the age of eighty-seven.

If the Princesse de Chalais had been a mother, we might never have heard of the Princesse des Ursins; but, a solitary widow, childless and without scope for her great intelligence and her deeply affectionate nature, she seems to have thrown herself in the decline of life, when the brilliance of her beauty no longer inspired the makers of sonnets and madrigals, upon diplomacy and politics, from the very lack of womanly occupation.

She first became acquainted with Spain in 1663, when she accompanied her first husband, the Prince de Chalais, in his flight from France to escape the sanguinary edicts of Richelieu still in force against duelling.

* "La Princesse des Ursins. Essai sur sa vie et son caractère politique d'après de nombreux documents inédits." Par M. François Combes. Paris, 1858. This volume, two volumes of Correspondence of the Princess, published by M. Gaffroy, and the Mémoires of the time, have given us the materials out of which the present article is constructed.

He had fought in one of the duelling encounters so common among the nobility of the Fronde, a duel of four against four, in which the Duc De Beauvilliers had been killed. From Spain they passed to Italy, where the Prince died while away from his wife at Venice. The Princess, who was at that time at Rome, showed exemplary grief as a widow, and gained the sympathies of all Roman society. She remained for some time secluded in a convent, and only five years afterwards accepted the hand of the Duke of Bracciano, the head of the Orsini family. This marriage, however, was not a happy one: the Duke and Duchess had different tastes and divergent views in politics. The Orsini Palace was, however, the centre of all that was distinguished in Rome. The Duchess supported the honours of her position with consummate grace, but also with a great deal of extravagance—an additional item in the Duke's list of complaints against her, for from the age of forty to the commencement of her diplomatic career, she seems to have taken part with a ready spirit in all the joyous follies of Roman life, in all "the revel and the masque of Italy," and to have wanted no taste for art or for the growing superiority of Italian music. She was, according to St. Simon, well qualified to take the lead in any line of life. She was above the middle height, with blue eyes which expressed anything she pleased; she had a perfect figure and bust; a face without regular beauty, but yet charming; a noble air, an exquisite and natural grace. St. Simon, whose experience was great, said he never saw anything approaching her charm of manner; it was flattering, caressing, animating, yet kept always in due limits, as though she wished to please merely for the sake of pleasing. It was impossible to resist her when she had set her heart on captivating and seducing. With all this, a most agreeable voice and a faculty in conversation delicious, inexhaustible, and highly entertaining. Since she had seen many countries and all their chief people, she was, moreover, a great judge of character; she attracted to her the best society, and kept quite a little court of her own; and from her position at Rome, and intimacy with the Roman cardinals, she became a mistress in that art of polished and subtle intrigue of

which the Papal Court was the unrivalled school. The portrait of St. Simon, even in this reduced form, will afford some explanation of the absorbing fascination which the Princesse des Ursins exercised on the young, brilliant, devoted, and heroic-natured Marie Louise, the first wife of Philip V. "Don't let her speak to you for two hours," said Philip V. to his second wife, as she was about to meet the Princesse des Ursins in her first and only interview, "or she will enchain you for ever." During the time of her second marriage she made sundry visits to France, and renewed her acquaintance with Madame de Maintenon, of whom she had been a rival in the salons of the Hotel d'Albret when the latter was only Madame Scarron and she herself was but a girl. It may be imagined that the unrivalled position and influence of Madame de Maintenon may have stimulated the seeds of ambition hitherto dormant in her nature, for she certainly was conscious of no inferiority to Madame de Maintenon. It has been even said that she nourished secretly the design of displacing the rigid favourite in the good graces of Louis XIV. Of this there is no proof, but at any rate she was sufficiently conscious of her abilities and her power of command to look out for a theatre for her activity; and the force of circumstances, as well, perhaps as her own calculations, drew her to Spain.

During the time of her visits to France and to Versailles the question of the Spanish Succession was agitating all Europe; and, as is well known, it was the opinion of Innocent XI., formally expressed in a letter, which finally determined the moribund Charles II. to draw up his famous testament in favour of the Duke d' Anjou, grandson of Louis XIV. The Duchess of Bracciano, connected by alliance with the greatest Pontifical families, with her little court in the Piazza Navona, attended by Roman cardinals, seemed a person deserving of the attention of the French Government. She was thoroughly tutored in the matter by Torcy, the French minister, and it was recommended to her diplomatic advocacy at Rome. She had the credit of having exercised a real influence upon the judgment of Innocent XI.; but she achieved something more effective even than this.

Portocarrero, the Archbishop of Toledo, the greatest ecclesiastic in Spain, the confidential adviser and minister of Charles II., came to Rome to receive the *pallium* and the cardinal's hat. She completely captivated Portocarrero, and elicited from him a promise to advocate the French claims to the succession with Charles II. When Louis XIV. knew that Portocarrero was won over, he considered the matter settled. He granted a pension to the Duchess of Bracciano, and Torcy wrote that he had now only to lower his flag before her in matters of diplomacy, and to become her pupil.

But neither Louis XIV., nor Torcy, nor Madame de Maintenon, had any notion of the heights to which ambition was now leading the Duchess of Bracciano, who, on the death of her husband, appeared before the world as the Princesse des Ursins, Ursins being the French for Orsini, her late husband's family name. The Duke had become reconciled to her before he died, and left her all he possessed; but she disposed of the duchy and title of Bracciano to Don Luigi Odescalchi, her late husband's kinsman. The young Duke of Anjou had now gone to Spain, and taken the title of Philip V., and was about to be married to a princess of Savoy, aged fourteen, the daughter of the wily Victor Amadeus, and the sister of the Duchesse de Bourgogne. According to the usage of the Spanish Court, the *camerera mayor*, the head lady-in-waiting of the Queen, was an indispensable and awful functionary, a sort of female grand inquisitor of etiquette, to whom constant domesticity with the royal couple gave terrible power and authority. If such was the case ordinarily, what ascendancy might not a *camerera mayor* such as the Princesse des Ursins attain over the minds of a boy king and a girl queen in the present condition of Spain?

Such was the reasoning of Madame des Ursins as she set about diplomatising for the post of *camerera mayor*: and she diplomatised in a way which proved her admirable sagacity in the ways of courts, and her knowledge of the natures of kings and ministers. She was by no means so impolitic as to ask at once for the post, which was of course virtually in the gift of Louis XIV.:

such a proceeding, she knew, would raise the suspicions of the politic monarch in her disfavour. She asked merely, as a preliminary, for the honour of being the lady attendant who, as custom was, accompanied a Spanish royal bride across the frontier. But she had already previously carefully prepared her way to Madrid by gaining entirely the friendship of Portocarrero in her intercourse with him at Rome, and by acquiring the favour of the Duchesse de Bourgogne, and of the Piedmontese Court, through her activity in obtaining the goodwill of the great Spanish ecclesiastics and grandes for the Piedmontese marriage of Philip V.

Carefully and cautiously did she gradually disclose the real object of her diplomacy, working by turns through her friend, the Maréchal de Noailles, through the Maréchale, the friend of Madame de Maintenon, through Madame de Maintenon herself, through Torcy the minister. The Maréchale de Noailles, later called by the wits of Versailles the mother of the ten tribes of Israel (she had twenty-two children), was fully equal to the confidence reposed in her by the Princesse des Ursins and to the occasion. "I think," the Princess suggested to Madame de Noailles, "that if I was in a good position I might make rain and sunshine in the Court of Spain; and that it would be easy enough for me to establish a dozen of *mesdemoiselles nos filles* in that country." Moreover, the young Duc d'Ayen, the eldest son and heir of the Noailles, was named for a mission to Spain at the Court of Philip V. The Princesse des Ursins took care to recommend him carefully to Portocarrero and her friends among the grandes; and when the Duc d'Ayen, who had himself considerable tact and ability, was making way to the favour of king and court, she began to make use of his influence in the most delicate way possible—for it naturally required great nicety of management for an elderly lady of the great position of the Princess to solicit any favour of so young a man as the Duc d'Ayen at the very outset of his career. The way in which she approached the young Duke was a model of diplomatic subtlety. "What opinion can you have of us Roman ladies," she wrote, "when you see

me making advances towards you, and giving myself the honour of writing to you, before you have discovered this confidence of mine?" A more subtle turn of expression for saving her dignity could hardly be invented. The Princess, having thus broken the ice, continues her letter by asking the Duke to speak of her to Philip V. as a lady fitted to perform the merely honorary charge of conducting his young bride to Madrid. Next she brought into play her old intimacy with Portocarrero; and Portocarrero, in pursuance of former promises, and at the Princess's suggestion, sent her a letter representing that, in his opinion and that of the chief statesmen of Spain, the Princesse des Ursins was admirably qualified for the distinction she desired. This letter of Portocarrero was duly forwarded to the Maréchale de Noailles, who laid it before the French minister, Torcy; but Torcy replied that the selection must depend on the choice of Victor Amadeus, Duke of Savoy, the father of the future Spanish bride.

The Princesse des Ursins, however, was not to be put off with such a reply. She knew that Torcy was favourably inclined towards her, and she now, through her friend the Maréchale, made another fine diplomatic suggestion, to the effect that Torcy should pay a visit to the Piedmontese ambassador at Paris, and should, just in the way of *casual conversation*, carelessly inquire whom the Duke of Savoy thought of naming as travelling *chaperone* to the Piedmontese princess, and then just as carelessly throw out a hint that the Princesse des Ursins would perform such a service admirably well. The Princess, knowing the ways well of kings and ambassadors, was sure the ambassador would report this conversation to the Duke of Savoy. The event justified her prevision, for on writing a letter with her own hand to the Duke of Savoy, he replied that he himself was not opposed to her request, only he referred the matter to Louis XIV. This was precisely the point to which the Princess desired to come—that Louis XIV. and the Court of Versailles should have the absolute decision of the affair. All her diplomatic stratagems now, therefore, were made to converge on Madame de Maintenon and Louis XIV. himself. She approached Madame de Maintenon in the subtlest and most refined insinuations of flattery; and as for Louis XIV., she, with a consummate air of much self-denial and modesty, requested that it should be represented to him that she would only, if it seemed best, go as far as the frontier in an official position, and afterwards proceed

to Madrid to pay her court to the young King and Queen in a private capacity; and indeed, moreover, *she really had business at the Spanish capital*. Were the meshes of diplomacy ever spun of a finer and subtler texture than these? Nevertheless, Louis XIV., with his appreciation of character and his knowledge of the ways of ambition, saw perhaps before anybody through those fine-drawn manœuvres, and was not disengaged by them. He saw clearly that what Madame des Ursins really was aiming at was the post of *camerera mayor*. Nevertheless the salutary advice he had given to his grandson on his departure for Spain was to take care that all his chief officers were Spaniards, and not to favour the French and arouse feelings of national jealousy; he consequently had his doubts about the advisability of naming a French lady for so thoroughly Spanish a dignity as that of the *camerera mayor*. But he also had advised Philip V. to place every confidence in Portocarrero, and Portocarrero was not only wholly gained over by the Princesse des Ursins, but Portocarrero produced some very solid reasons why, in the present instance, a Spanish lady ought not to fill the post, and why the choice of a foreign noblewoman, who had no family to lead into honours, dignities, and pensions, and was thus not calculated to excite the jealousy and animosity of families rivalling with her own, would in every respect be preferable.

Madame de Maintenon's mediation was the last and great trump-card which the Princess laid down upon the hesitation and scruples of Louis XIV. The game was won, and she was actually named *camerera mayor* before she had quitted Rome, and before the young Piedmontese princess had left Turin.

The Princesse des Ursins began forthwith to organize her household so that she might enter Spain in due state. She strained all her resources to make a fitting display in the eyes of a people fond of pomp. "I have usually four gentlemen-in-waiting," she wrote to the Maréchal de Noailles; "now I take another, a Spaniard; and when at Madrid I shall take two or three more, who shall be well acquainted with the Court and be calculated to do me credit. Of the four which I now entertain, two are French and two are Italian. One of the latter is of one of the best Sicilian families, the other is a near relative of Prince Vaini." She increased her pages to the number of six—"tous gens de condition et capables d'être chevaliers de Malte." She had her chaplain. "I do not speak of my other attendants; I have these of every kind. I

have twelve lackeys — my ordinary supply. When arrived at the Court, I will increase the number with Spaniards." She had one very fine carriage, "*sans or ni argent néanmoins*;" but she had another, a gilded state-carriage, lately ordered; this was to go with six horses when she drove outside Madrid. However, she assures her correspondent, the mother of twenty-two children, with an eye on the royal coffer, that she will not have recourse to the treasury of Louis XIV. "Je suis gueuse, il est vrai; mais je suis encore plus fière." "On this occasion I will make it a point of honour not to demand anything. Nevertheless my expenses shall be suited to the splendour of my position, and shall make the Spaniards admire the greatness of the King." However, it appears that, on the eve of embarking on her great enterprise, she began to think seriously of the difficulties into which she was about to plunge. "I believe," she wrote to Torcy, "that I shall meet with as many adventures as Don Quixote in the undertaking you impose upon me."

She met the young Princess Marie Louise de Savoie at Villa-franca, near Nice, to which place she had gone by sea. She was delighted with the appearance of the young queen, and wrote to Torcy, "qu'elle saurait faire la reine à merveille;" and indeed, Marie Louise, without being a perfect beauty, was a worthy sister of the Duchess de Bourgogne, the darling of Louis XIV. and the Court of Versailles. She was tall and well made, with a brilliant though pale complexion, with a loving heart and a noble nature, thoroughly capable of appreciating the fine qualities of Madame des Ursins, to whom she speedily attached herself with childish affection. From Villafranca and Nice the *camerera mayor* travelled through the south of France, side by side with her young charge, in a litter, to Figuières, on the Spanish frontier. There is no need to say that they were received with royal honours and discharge of artillery at every town on their route, and that, according to invariable Spanish custom on arriving at the frontier, the Piedmontese attendants were dismissed, and their place supplied by the stiff and formal ladies of Spain.

The marriage was to take place at Figuières, and Marie Louise was to enter Spain as queen in fact and in name. The young couple — the King of eighteen and the bride of fourteen — were duly united; but after the marriage ceremony some incidents ensued of an amusing character, most characteristic of Spain, and of the usual reception of royal Spanish brides.

The supper had been prepared half of

French and half of Spanish fashion; the dishes half of one kind and half of the other. But the Spanish ladies — the attendants of their new young Queen — had visited the supper-table before the royal couple sat down, and saw with disgust this array of heretical French meats on the table. Ever since the beginning of time, so to speak, the Spaniards had insisted that the brides of their sovereigns should, immediately on entering Spain, become pure Spanish at once, conform to the severe usages of Spanish etiquette, and take to the Spartan diet, the national *puchero*, and the garlic of Spain. The Spanish ladies at once seized these abominable French inventions, and threw them into corners of the room and out of windows into the street. This energetic proceeding naturally caused immense surprise to the only three foreign persons of the party at Figuières — to the young King and his bride, and to the Princesse des Ursins. Nevertheless, all had sufficient self-command to go through the supper without remark. However, as soon as the young Queen was alone with her husband and the Princesse des Ursins, her indignation broke loose. She sobbed, she wept, and she stormed. She complained bitterly of the dismissal of her Piedmontese attendants. She was indignant at the coarseness of the Spanish ladies, and declared that she would go no farther, but return to Piedmont. It was impossible to appease the wrath of the young bride. Philip finally left the room, hoping that, in his absence, the indignation of the Queen would subside; but there was no sign of this. Marie Louise passed the night obstinately alone, declaring, in spite of all the remonstrances of Madame des Ursins, that she would return instantly back to Turin. Here was a scandalous beginning of royal wedded life! The poor child did not recover even on the following day from her ill-humour and vexation; so on the following night, Philip himself, acting on the advice of his chief gentleman-in-waiting, assumed the air of the injured party, and sent word to his Queen that he would retire to rest alone. This brought Marie Louise to reason. She apologised for her childish conduct, promised to behave in future like a queen and a woman; and on the third morning after the marriage the young couple left Figuières completely reconciled.

Madame des Ursins, in the commencement, wisely confined her cares to the duties of her office, which were for the most part of a singularly domestic character for a descendant of the great family of the Tremouilles. She writes to the Maréchal de Noailles, "Dans quel emploi, bon Dieu !

m'avez vous mise ? Je n'ai pas le moindre repos."

In fact, the Princess writes she could neither take her ease after dinner, nor eat when she was hungry. She was only too happy to snatch a bad meal as she ran on her duties. It was, she said, very rare for her not to be called the moment she sat down to table. "In truth, Madame de Maintenon would laugh if she knew the details of my charge. Tell her, I beg, that it is I who have the honour of taking the King of Spain's dressing-gown when he goes to bed, and of giving him that and his slippers when he rises. That, however, I could make light of; but really it seems too absurd that every evening, when the King comes to the Queen's bedchamber, the Conde de Benavente should hand me the King's sword, and a bottle and a lamp, which I ordinarily upset on my dress." Indeed, among the other strange fashions of royal etiquette in Spain, there was one which provided that the King, when he went to visit the Queen at night, should go in a cloak armed with sword and buckler, and carrying a bottle. The *camerera mayor* had, moreover, to wake the King in the morning, and sometimes "he is so kind," wrote the Princess, "that he often sends for me two hours at least before I want to rise." All know of the rigours of old palace Spanish etiquette, which allowed kings to be roasted if the proper officer was not at hand to remove the brazier, and queens to be dragged by the stirrup to death by rearing horses, rather than permit them to be touched by a profane hand. Some of the incidents given by the Princess of the jealousy and rivalry of the great grandees on matters of etiquette are truly comic. Thus we have the venerable Patriarch of the Indies, who, however, the Princess says, looked like an ape, taking a napkin surreptitiously into church with him, and rushing at the most solemn moment of the sacrament before the King and Queen, and producing his cloth from his pocket for their use, because he found that it had been arranged that the *camerera mayor* should take his place at the ceremony. Another scene described in her letter is, if possible, still more amusing: thus we have the Conde de Priego and the Duque de Osuna fighting at the foot of the altar for the honour of moving his majesty's chair up to his *prie-dieu*. Both noblemen were very small, but the Duque de Osuna carried the day; and yet there was a moment, writes the Princess, when she thought the Duke, who was no bigger than a rat, would tumble beneath the chair, and fall upon the King at his

prie-dieu, who would infallibly, if he had been knocked over, have fallen upon the Queen.

The influence of the strong mind of the Princesse des Ursins upon the youthful King and Queen of Spain became soon to be felt even in matters of government.

The state of ruin, hunger, and desolation of Spain at the time of the accession of the first Bourbon prince was something appalling. There are no records in history which present such a picture of beggared pride and misery and decay. The giant form which had once overawed the world had become a ragged scarecrow—an object of mockery and scorn. Charles II., the last king of the house of Austria, was a beggar and a pauper among monarchs. He was unable at times to find food for the table of the gentlemen of his bedchamber, and even oats and straw for his horses. He went on begging expeditions from town to town to ask for money, and generally in vain. The once-dreaded legions of Spain were reduced down to a miserable, starved, ragged remnant of unpaid boys and old men, numbering about fifteen thousand, officered by *hidalgos*, who begged in the streets of Flanders and in the ports of Spain. The dockyards which sent forth the invincible Armada had not a ship on the stocks. The art of shipbuilding was forgotten, and a few wretched men-of-war lay rotting in the harbours. Whole provinces had become denuded of towns and villages; the most fertile districts of Spain had become a desert; commerce and industry and agriculture were despised alike by all classes, and were in fact non-existent.

Nearly all the needs of Spain—its clothes and its very bread—were produced by foreign workmen. Each Spaniard desired, without income, to live like a nobleman. The population decreased yearly. People ceased to marry, or entered into monasteries and convents; and priests and monks owned, it was supposed, about a third part of the soil of Spain.

It was not then a misfortune for Spain to exchange the effete Austrian dynasty for the race of the Bourbons, under whose rule France had risen almost in the same proportion as Spain had fallen, which had adopted more humane principles of toleration and more enlightened ideas of political economy. Yet the difficulty of reconciling the Spaniards to any reforms or system of government imported from the institutions of their ancient enemies, to be carried out by the French counsellors of Philip V., was necessarily very great. The hatred of the *gavachos*, as the French have been

called in Spain from time immemorial, was intense.

Hence it was that the influence of the Princesse des Ursins was so salutary. She was only ostensibly occupying the post of *camerera mayor* without any acknowledged mission from the Court of Versailles, and yet she was thoroughly acquainted with its policy and in constant correspondence with Torcy, the French Minister, and with Madame de Maintenon and the Maréchal de Noailles. On excellent terms at first with Portocarrero, who at the beginning of the reign of Philip V. was all powerful, she had by far better opportunities of bringing about harmonious relations between the governments of France and Spain than the French ambassador himself, while her previous residence in Spain had made her well-acquainted with the usages and necessities of the country.

The task, however, was no easy one of getting the Spaniards, on the one side, to accept the government of a French King, assisted by French ministers, and of co-operating with the policy of Versailles on the other, so as to satisfy the exacting supervision which Louis XIV. and his ministers exercised over Spanish affairs; for although Louis XIV. had given his grandson the advice not to surround himself with French ministers, and to respect all Spanish national feeling, yet this was but with the view of rendering the Spaniard more easily manageable for the purposes of his own ambition, and the maintenance of complete harmony between the two governments was indispensable in the war of the Spanish Succession.

It was no wonder, moreover, that a Queen of Spain should give herself wholly up to an adviser and companion like the Princesse des Ursins, for the monotony and isolation of palace life, guarded about by the inviolable prescriptions of Spanish etiquette, was something frightful. According to Spanish notions, the life of a Spanish queen should partake of the seclusion of the harem and the convent. She saw no society but those of her regular attendants. A tyrannical *camerera mayor* might, if she chose, be intolerable. She might, as did the *camerera mayor* of the first queen of Charles II., prevent her from looking out of window. The stern gloom and rigidity with which *camereras mayores* had exercised their authority were habitual, and some of the former French queens of Spain had died of the terrible monotony of their prison life. It was, then, a great boon for the wife of Philip V. to be allowed the unprecedented luxury of a French-woman for a *camerera mayor*,

whose loveliness of nature, whose intellectual qualities, whose education, whose liberality in the matter of etiquette, and whose bright and good looks even at sixty-six made her an entertaining companion as well as a good adviser. The former Spanish queens had been condemned for amusement to insupportably childish games, something like spills, with their husbands, and to badly-acted Spanish plays. The Princesse des Ursins endeavoured to lighten the heavy atmosphere of the Spanish Court by getting up theatrical amusements, in which Corneille and Molière replaced Calderon and Lopez de la Vega; and by concerts in which the music of the Italian masters, just then beginning to become fashionable in Europe, was first heard in the capital of Spain, in the palace of *Buen Retiro*. The young King and Queen were grateful for the vivacity and variety which she thus ingeniously and incessantly introduced into a life which both regarded as a kind of exile; and, moreover, the very domestic nature of her charge gave her an opportunity of tutoring the young Queen in such fashion that Philip V., who was perhaps the most uxorious monarch who ever reigned, was completely at the disposal of his wife.

The duties of her position naturally gave the Princess a right of advising on the manners, dress, and habits of the King and Queen; she extended this to matters of high policy, and invariably gave advice calculated to conciliate the Spanish nation towards the new dynasty. She advised the use of the Spanish language exclusively at Court, the performance by the Queen of the customary pilgrimages to the shrine of our Lady of Atocha, and other sacred places: the adoption by Philip V. of the Spanish costume, and especially of the stiff unsightly *gollilla*, or Spanish ruff, to which the nobility were especially attached; the royal attendance at bull-fights, and the practice of the national *juego de canas*; at the same time she strongly dissuaded the monarch from attending at those human sacrifices, the *autos da fe*, one of which was always prepared in honour of every new accession and every royal marriage. And the young Bourbon King was the first monarch who ventured thus to discountenance the practice of those rites of Moloch.

Madame des Ursins, indeed, did not hesitate to grapple at once with the Inquisition immediately on her arrival in Spain, and her success in delivering Aguilar Diaz, the confessor of the late King, from its dungeons, after a struggle of four years, created a new power in the country. Her influence became so manifest at last, that the French

ministers and Court attendants, including the Jesuit confessor who accompanied Philip V. to Madrid, all grew jealous of the great influence of the *camerera mayor* over the royal councils. The French ambassador in 1703, the Cardinal d'Estrées, especially had made himself remarkable by his hostility to Madame des Ursins, and a struggle for dominion took place between them. Louis XIV., who was the arbiter of their differences in the close watch which he kept upon the affairs of Spain, decided at first in favour of his ambassador, and determined on recalling the *camerera mayor*. He changed his determination on account of the urgent entreaties of the Queen, who supplicated, that if Madame des Ursins was recalled, the Cardinal and his nephew, the Abbé d'Estrées, who served him as secretary, should be recalled also. Other representations in favour of the Princess, which portrayed all Spain as ardently desiring the continuance of her stay in Spain, were made. A temporary reconciliation between the Cardinal and the Princess followed, as the price of the withdrawal of the recall of Madame des Ursins. However, at the last the Cardinal was removed, and the Abbé d'Estrées, who had deserted his uncle when he saw that he was likely to be worsted in the conflict, remained as ambassador; and the triumph of Madame des Ursins was completed by the recall of the Jesuit confessor, and nearly every French minister or attendant possessed of any authority in Spain. However, the Abbé d'Estrées, as ambassador, was unable to reconcile himself to the part he had undertaken, and while professing outwardly complete submission to the superiority of the *camerera mayor*, treacherously wrote a despatch to the French minister, full of bitterness and insinuation against his rival. He had offered himself to submit every despatch to the perusal of Madame des Ursins before sending it away, but this one despatch he endeavoured to send surreptitiously by the ordinary courier, who not seeing upon it the accustomed mark of the Princesse des Ursins, as a sign of her acquaintance with the contents, carried the despatch to the *camerera mayor*. With her usual audacity Madame des Ursins wrote indignant marginal notes, and one of them of a most singular character.

She had an equerry, named d'Aubigny, called *un tout petit sire* by St. Simon, who played a sort of nondescript rôle among her attendants. He had immense share in her confidence, and it was complained that he was the only man who slept in the palace. Indeed, his apartment formed part of the suite of the Princess's own. In the des-

patch of the Abbé d'Estrées, mention was made of d'Aubigny, and it was stated that people had no doubt that he was married to her. "Oh, pour mariée, non!" wrote the Princess in all the indignation of a *grande dame*, as a marginal note.

The opening of this despatch and the marginal note came to the knowledge of Louis XIV., and his anger was great. However, by the aid of her friends at Versailles, the *Camerera* got over this difficulty, and the Abbé d'Estrées in disgust followed his uncle, and gave up his post. But, nevertheless, shortly afterwards another subject of disagreement came between the Court of Versailles and that of Madrid, on the subject of the command of the war in Spain. The King insisted that Philip V. should shake off what he styled the shameful sloth of the palace, and put himself at the head of his armies. Madame des Ursins and the Queen both, however, set themselves against this advice of Louis XIV. The opposition of Madame des Ursins was not unknown at the Court of Versailles. The Cardinal d'Estrées, eager for revenge, beset all her friends with his representations, till, one by one, Torcy, Madame de Noailles (whose son-in-law, the Duc de Grammont, arrived at the Embassy of Madrid), and even Madame de Maintenon, ceased to defend her, and she was recalled.

She was recalled, however, only to be sent back again with greater authority than before. Her disgrace was the way to her triumph. In fact, the affairs of Spain during her absence went from bad to worse. The King, after a brief effort at independence, had made his incapacity more apparent. Montellano, with the grandees in the *Despacho*, attempted to absorb the whole sovereign power, to oppose every French project, to prevent the formation of an army, and to prevent the King from being master of it. The great defeat of Blenheim came to throw into still greater disfavour the French alliance in Spain; and, to add to the difficulties of Louis XIV., the chief grandees began to be of opinion that the only hope of saving the integrity of the Spanish monarchy was to range Spain on the side of the allies, and against the monarch of France. The Queen of Spain, aware of the danger of their position, wrote day by day the most urgent letters of appeal to Madame de Maintenon for the return of her *camerera mayor*.

Louis XIV. consented at last to send back the indispensable *camerera mayor*, but he did so with great repugnance. He who in early life had engaged with Colbert to deliver himself of any woman in twenty-four

hours, as soon as he should be told that she influenced his politics, felt contempt and pity for his weak-minded grandson, who was incapable of the slightest initiative, and was a mere cipher without his wife, who herself was nothing without her lady of the palace. Of his intense desire to get rid of Madame des Ursins altogether, and to efface the traces of her influence in Spain, evidence is extant, in the pseudonymous correspondence which he carried on with his ambassador, the Duke of Grammont; yet he became convinced at last that Madame des Ursins was the only person capable of reconciling the discordant elements of which the Council of Madrid was composed.

Having resolved, therefore, that she should return to Spain, his policy naturally was that she should return with all the consideration and *prestige* which royal favour could bestow upon her; and Louis XIV. accordingly went through his part with a grand resignation which concealed all the sadness which must have been at the bottom of his heart.

A courier was accordingly despatched to Toulouse, where Madame des Ursins was residing, with permission for her to appear at Versailles.

"Nothing," says St. Simon, "could equal the air of triumph which Madame des Ursins assumed at Marly (at a ball), or the attention of the King to distinguish her and do her honour and everything; it was as if she were a small Queen of England in the very freshness of arrival. Nothing could equal the majestic fashion with which everything was received by the Princess. She bore herself with a mixture of grace and politeness long since effaced, and which recalled the memory of the oldest times of the queen-mother.

"The King was admirable in giving a value to everything, and in making valuable what in itself had no value at all. Madame de Maintenon and Madame la Duchesse de Bourgogne were only occupied with Madame des Ursins, who made more remarkable the prodigious flight she had taken by a little dog which she carried under her arm than by any political distinction. No one could recover from the surprise at such a familiarity which Madame la Duchesse de Bourgogne herself would not have permitted herself—trifles have such importance when they are beyond example. *The King at the end of one of these balls caressed the little spaniel!!!* which was another subject of surprise for the spectators. Since that time Madame des Ursins was never to be seen at the Chateau of Marly without this little spaniel under the arm, which became for her the last mark of favour and distinction."

Madame des Ursins not only went back

to Spain, but she went back with conditions drawn up by her in the form of a regular treaty, and accepted by the King; and she, moreover, named herself a new French ambassador, Amelot, in the place of the Duc de Grammont, and Orry, whose talents as an administrator and financier of the school of Colbert had obtained for him a previous mission to Spain, was also said to give her assistance.

The nine years, from 1705 to 1714, which followed, were the most important of Madame des Ursins's existence. Had it not been for this French *camerera mayor*, Louis XIV. would have abandoned his grandson to the mercy of the Allies. Spain, under the direction of Madame des Ursins, rose from the lowest state of prostration and abasement. The country which formed one of the main causes of the ruin of Napoleon, became, and through her alone for a time, the single theatre where the glory of Louis XIV. was not overwhelmed with disaster. Almanza and Villaviciosa came in to balance the evil fortune of Ramiiles, Oudearde, and Malplaquet. The victory of Almanza in 1707, which consecrated by a brilliant victory the regal power of Philip V. in Spain, had been in great part prepared by the careful administration and great reforms of the Princesse des Ursins. Four years before Almanza, Amelot wrote in one of his despatches, that Philip V. had neither troops, nor arms, nor artillery; his domestics were not paid, and his bodyguard, dying of hunger, went to eat the scraps which were distributed at the gates of the convents. Even the previous year, at the failure of the siege of Barcelona, then in the hands of the Allies, Philip V., with his Queen at Burgos, and Madrid occupied by his rival, was as little the King of Spain as was Charles VII. of France at Bourges. Berwick had declared that all was lost in Extremadura and Castile, and that nothing remained for the King but to fly to the mountains of the north of Spain, to be as near as possible to the frontier of France. Three parts of Spain were in possession of the Austrian prince who claimed the succession of Charles II. The great mass of the grandees deserted to the side of the Archduke, who was proclaimed in Madrid under the title of Charles III. Even the Cardinal Portocarrero, the founder of the Bourbon dynasty in Spain, obeyed the dictates of resentment at the disgrace into which he had fallen, embraced openly the cause of the rival of Philip V., and opened the gates of Toledo to his enemies. He illuminated his palace, had the *Te Deum* sung in the cathedral, gave a splendid ban-

quet to the officers of the army of the Allies, at which they drank to the health of Charles III., King of Spain, and gave a public benediction to the standards of the Austrian pretender. But the cause of Philip V. had been embraced by the people in the capital. The populace made use of every hostile device, some of them of unparalleled strangeness, for the destruction and discomfort of his enemies, and peasants in the country came in bodies to the King supplicating delivery from the yoke of the grandes who overrode them with exactions. The great mass of the people of Spain remained faithful to the adopted heir of their last sovereign. Madame des Ursins took admirable advantage of this popular enthusiasm. By her addresses, by her letters, and by the applications she directed, she obtained voluntary gifts for the support of the army of the King; 8000 *pistoles* from the province of Burgos, from another province 15,000, and much greater contributions from the richest cities of Andalusia. Money and bread and clothes arrived in abundance at the camp of Berwick, and the King of Spain had a satisfaction long unknown to any monarch in the country, that of having his troops well paid and fed. He was transported with this wonderful good fortune, and immediately wrote a letter of the warmest thanks and acknowledgments for the devotion of the lady who had procured such an unexpected result in the darkest hour of his peril. One of her letters from Burgos to Madame de Maintenon at this time gave a lively idea of the straits to which the royal family was driven, and of the life of Madame des Ursins.

"I will give you the description of my apartment to amuse you. It consists of a single piece, which is not more than twelve feet wide in any direction. A large window, which does not shut, exposed to the south, occupies all one side. A door, very low, serves me for a passage into the chamber of the Queen, and the door leads to a windy passage where I do not venture to go, although two or three lamps are always burning there, for it is so badly paved that I might break my neck. I cannot say the walls are white, for they are very dirty. My travelling-bed, with a camp-stool and a deal table, is the only furniture I have, which last serves me as a writing-table and for eating the remains of the Queen's dinner—for I have neither kitchen nor money to provide me. I laugh at all that."

Nevertheless, after the battle of Almanza, the fortunes of Philip V., temporarily upraised by a brilliant victory, seemed to have fallen lower than before, and the energy of Madame des Ursins alone saved the Span-

ish monarchy from dismemberment, and Philip from being a realmless monarch.

In 1709, Louis XIV. was so hard pressed by the Allies, and France so exhausted, that the Court of Versailles seriously contemplated the abandonment of his grandson. Philip V. himself prepared to resign himself to his fate. It was then that all the spirit of this extraordinary and intelligent woman, now seventy-four years of age, was aroused. "What sire!" said she to Philip V., "are you a prince? are you a man—you who treat your royal title so lightly and have feelings weaker than a woman?" Not only did she renew again all her efforts for the recruiting, discipline, and support of the Spanish army, but she threw herself thoroughly into the state of French affairs, —wrote eloquent and indignant letters to Madame de Maintenon, and propounded a scheme for utilizing anew the resources of France and filling afresh the exhausted treasury for the purposes of the war; and when we add to the political difficulties with which she was daily struggling, the illness of the Queen after confinement of a second son, and upon whom, as *camerera mayor*, she was obliged to be in constant attendance, it must be imagined that more anxieties and cares never fell to the lot of a septuagenarian lady.

This stroke of policy of hers at this period was of surprising audacity, and worthy of the spirit which dictated the letters characterized by Madame de Maintenon as "*lettres à feu et à sang*." The Spanish people were so indignant at what they considered the treachery of the French King in contemplating the abandonment of his grandson, that the old international hatred between the two nations was awakened. The French residents in Madrid were in danger of their lives. In this state of things, Madame des Ursins ventured on the most daring act of her life. She extracted from the King a decree which banished all the French from Spain, and thus threw the new monarchy on the undivided sympathies of the Spanish people. This stroke of policy of Madame des Ursins had the happiest effect in reconciling the grandes of Spain to the Bourbon dynasty. The Princess was carrying on two great struggles at the same time — one against the supporters of the Archduke, and the other against the grandes, who, like all aristocracies, seized the opportunity, when the monarchy was in this struggling condition, to aggrandize their privileges and pretensions. The Spanish nobility were now ambitious of recovering some of their feudal privileges, which they had lost under Charles V. and Philip II.

From the beginning of her administration she had opposed resolutely the pretensions and unveiled the intrigues of some and punished the treachery of others of the grandes. Having discovered the high treason of the *amirante* of Castile, she had him prosecuted and condemned to death, which caused the Duke of Medina Celi to exclaim, "People like ourselves ought not to be treated thus!" But the Duke of Medina Celi himself, having conspired with the Duke of Orleans, and having as Minister of Foreign Affairs betrayed a trust reposed in him, was also arrested, and died in a state prison; and the Marquis de Leganez, another great noble, was also sent into captivity to France.

In fact, in almost every matter of internal policy Madame des Ursins followed the example of statesmanship in France, where not only the repression of oligarchical power, but the centralization and amplification of the administration, had been the aim of every French Government from Philip Augustus to Richelieu and Louis XIV. Thus after Almanza she ventured resolutely on a *coup d'état*, which put an end to the administrative and legislative chaos of Spain, where, up to that time, every province had its own *fueros* and *cortes*, and Catalans and Arragonese had been as jealous of Castilians as though they had been of different nations. But this daring lady was not content with having to grapple with the Archduke and his allies, with the great mass of the grandes, and with the thousandfold abuses of Spanish administration and justice; she dared to make assault even on the Inquisition, and to establish in Spain for the Spanish Church that independence which the Gallican Church had acquired in France; — a proceeding, however, which was discouraged by Louis XIV., who wrote to his grandson, "Croyez-moi, vous n'êtes pas assez fort pour avoir encore vos libertés gallicanes."

The greatest proof of the excellence of the administration of Madame des Ursins was the devotion which the people of Spain showed towards the cause of Philip V., and the final reconciliation of the grandes to his government. When the Archduke, after his victory at Saragossa, had opened again the way to Madrid, and Philip V. had again taken his Court to the north to Valladolid, although the fugitive King had given permission to all the inhabitants to remain in the capital, yet all citizens who were able deserted the city for Valladolid. Even shopkeepers and artizans followed the general example; and some poor, and some even infirm, officers of justice made the

journey to Valladolid on foot. All houses and shops and workshops were shut up. The capital seemed a desert; and when the allied troops entered the city, and the Archduke Charles went, at the head of two thousand horsemen, to return thanks to *Nuestra-Senora de Atocha*, only some ragged boys, in the hopes of getting a few *maravides*, cried *Viva el Rey Carlos!*

The grandes themselves, in their stately pride, were touched by the enthusiasm of the people, and came over in a body to the King; a change of feeling, manifested by a letter to Louis XIV., signed by all the leading nobles, declaring their fidelity to his grandson, describing the pressing need of his cause for fresh assistance, and asking for French co-operation.

This application was the proposition of the Duke of Medina Sidonia, and was signed by the Dukes de l'Infantado, Popoli, d'Arcos, d'Abrantes, de Bagneo, de Veraguas, de Montellano de Bejar, the Condestable of Castile, the Marquises de Almonacid and del Carpio, the Condes de Lernos and Peflara, and a crowd of others of the greatest names of Spain; only the great Duke d'Osuna, he who was "no bigger than a rat," always faithful to Philip V., refused to sign, from true motives of Castilian pride: he was haughtily discontented with Louis XIV., that he should have thought of abandoning his grandson and Spain, and said Spain would suffice for the work herself.

The joy of Louis XIV. at this letter was immense. He read it several times, and agreed to send to the assistance of his grandson 14,000 men. The great Vendome, the grandson of Henri IV. and Gabrielle d'Estrées, was sent as general; and, on the 10th of December 1710, the united Spanish and French army, with Vendome as general-in-chief, gained the great victory of Villaviciosa, which established the Bourbon dynasty securely. The nobles of Spain, fired with their new fidelity, and jealous of distinction under the eyes of the famous French general, fought with brilliant valour, and thousands of standards were taken, of which the French marshal made a couch for the first Bourbon king of Spain on the night of the victory. After ten years of struggle and persecution, the standard of the *fleur-de-lis* was firmly planted in Spain.

Madame des Ursins, to whom so large a portion of that success must be attributed, was herself already a grande of Spain. She now received, in company with the Duke de Vendome, the title of Her Highness, and the order of the Golden Fleece, with a promise of a sovereign principality in the Low Countries.

In the year 1711 everything turned to the advantage of Philip: the Archduke, his rival, was elected Emperor. His allies were not inclined to confer upon Austria that aggrandizement which they had refused to France, and to create another empire like that of Charles V.; they consequently refused to make further efforts in his behalf. Marlborough, whose scientific blows had nearly laid helpless the French monarchy, fell into disgrace, and was recalled; and in 1712, the French, under Villars, were enabled to win the battle of Denain, and to lay down the basis of the Peace of Utrecht.

Madame des Ursins, however, though her great work was achieved still remained in Spain, directing reforms, administrative and financial, of the Colbert character, with the aid of the industrious Orry, and fighting with the Inquisition. Nevertheless the Inquisition was still too strong for her; for, says Llorente, 1574 persons were burnt in the reign of Philip V., and 11,750 subjected to penitential punishment. But the power of the Church in Spain was enormous. "The abuses of the clergy," wrote Macanaz, a jurist employed by Madame des Ursins to fight her battles, and made by her a member of the *Despacho*, "have weakened the royal power. The ecclesiastic immunities only serve to favour usurpation and disorder. The churches are become the refuges of criminals, and the right of asylum has been extended from these sacred edifices to adjoining houses, to shops, and whole neighbouring quarters. The ecclesiastics, the monks and the nuns, encroach yearly on the rights of the King by continual acquisition of secular property, which forthwith becomes exempt from taxation. The clergy have in the State more subjects than the King. The ambition of some ministers has tolerated these abuses to give them the opportunity of enriching their families with the goods of the Church." Dangerous words these in the days of the Inquisition, when its name made men's blood still run cold with terror, and its power was sufficient to lodge the greatest grandee in its dungeons. The documents in which it was spoken of were consequently kept profoundly secret; and the very Council of Castile first resolved to adopt the precaution, in their proceedings against the Inquisition, of *voting by ballot*. The Inquisitors, it was argued, could not seize on the whole Council at once; yet even then the Council was afraid. The Inquisitors, working on the religious prejudices of the people, got up a popular commotion at Madrid; and Philip V. himself, and all his Council, were too terrified at the awful power they

were confronting to follow the energetic advice of Madame des Ursins and Orry, and abolish it. So the Inquisition still remained unshorn of much of its terrible power; yet the struggle of Madame des Ursins with it was not wholly fruitless. She had found a vigorous and firm ally in England, who, since the Peace of Utrecht, had maintained an ambassador in Madrid; and it was decreed that the palace of the English ambassador, and every English ship in a Spanish harbour, should be exempt from the power of the Inquisition. The British flag and the British nationality, owing to Madame des Ursins, alone braved the Inquisition in the soil of Spain, and offered protection to every victim.

But the reign, as it may be called, of the Princess was drawing to a close. Her young protectress and friend, the Queen of Spain, who joined to the affection of a daughter the deepest respect for her great intelligence, died at the age of twenty-five in 1714. The heroine Marie Louise, who had given a soul to her weak-minded husband — who had been a wanderer with him in his rapid and forced flight amidst the rugged mountains of the Asturias, where she had often to be content with the bed and fare of a peasant and a mountaineer, worn out with ten years of difficulty, and sometimes of privation, during which she was subject to the moral distress of seeing her own father, the faithless Duke of Savoy, ranged among her enemies — was no more, and Madame des Ursins was left alone with Philip V.

The position of Madame des Ursins was now necessarily extremely delicate; and in the ten months which intervened between the death of Marie Louise and the second final disgrace of the Princess, her conduct was not of a nature to disarm jealousy and to avert the venomous force of scandal. She should have exercised greater precaution, since she well knew that she was detested by the priests, and that the grandees and ministers of the Spanish Court were not attached to her, but only tolerated the ascendancy of this audacious French old lady, who was satisfied with nothing in Spain, who carried her reforming mania into everything, and had even violated the most inviolable rules of Court etiquette. Louis XIV., who detested all meddling of women in politics, moreover, had also only tolerated her as being for a time indispensable, and had been highly indignant that Philip V., out of gratitude to the Princess, had supported, with the allies, her claims to a sovereign principality in Flanders, in return for her services, with such pertinacity, that he delayed the sign-

ing of the Peace of Utrecht. Madame des Ursins, however, in all the pride of her conscious superiority, continued governing Spain with a high hand. She exiled one of her chief ministers from motives of personal discontent — she imprisoned two of the greatest grandees — broke with all whom she considered her enemies, or even lukewarm friends — set the Duke of Berwick, who was sent to a military command in Spain, at defiance — and treated even Madame de Maintenon with haughtiness.

Being now close upon eighty, and Philip V. only thirty-two, she may have imagined scandal could make nothing of their relations, and she kept the King in leading strings, and hardly let him out of her sight. At the palace of the Duke of Medina Celi, to which she transferred the King from the Buen Retiro after the death of his queen, she had a corridor made between the monarch's apartments and her own. This corridor gave rise to immense scandal in Madrid. Yet Madame des Ursins, it must be remembered, was not only chief political adviser of the King, but the governess of his children, who lived in her apartments; and the constant society of the young princes was the chief consolation of Philip V. for the loss of Marie Louise.

Nevertheless the evil tongues of Madrid made much of the corridor. The Jesuit confessor of Philip one day during an interview confided to him that, both in France and Spain, people thought he meant to marry her. "Moi l'épouser!" replied the King; "oh! pour cela, non!" Fatigued at last, however, he said to Madame des Ursins, "Cherchez-moi une femme; nos têtes-à-têtes scandalisent le peuple."

There was at this time at Madrid, in the service of the legation of the Duke of Parma, an intriguing, restless, ambitious Italian priest, Alberoni by name, who had been brought originally to Spain by the Duke of Vendome. He was himself a Parmesan by birth, and the son of a gardener. The great rôle which Madame des Ursins played in Spanish affairs stimulated his ambition, and he was destined to outdo her and to take her place. He saw the part which a foreigner might play in Spanish politics. He allied himself at first with the Grand Inquisitor, the Cardinal del Guidice, and offered his services secretly to defend the Inquisition against the assaults of the *camerera mayor*. Then the wily Italian broke apparently with Del Guidice, and paid his court to Madame des Ursins.

The Princess of Parma happened to be among the number of princesses who were considered as eligible for marriage with the

Spanish king. She was, as her subsequent history proved, one of the most intractable, imperious, and domineering of ladies — a royal virago. Madame des Ursins was naturally anxious that the new queen should be of a precisely opposite character. Alberoni, from being at the Court of Parma, was acquainted with the character of the princess, and on being personally consulted by Madame des Ursins as to the character of the Princess of Parma, assured her that the princess was one of the most docile of creatures, and that she would have no difficulty in establishing an empire as complete over her as she had held over the late Queen of Spain.

Madame des Ursins was ravished at this false account of the Princess of Parma, and despatched Alberoni forthwith to negotiate the marriage. Some expressions, however, of the satisfaction of her enemies at the step she had taken reached her. After further inquiry she became aware that Alberoni had deceived her, and she endeavoured to stop the marriage by sending a courier. The courier arrived at Parma a day or two before the marriage. The Court of Parma got wind of his errand, and had him seized and threatened with death if he divulged a word of his mission. Madame des Ursins set forth from Madrid to meet the new queen as *camerera mayor*. One of the last acts of this remarkable woman before she went to encounter the fiery young princess who was to annihilate her political existence, was the establishment of an academy at Madrid, framed after the model of the *Académie Française*. She had some warnings of the fate which awaited her; but she despised all. Everything, however, had been arranged for her overthrow. The King himself had, with consummate cowardice and treachery, and with palpitating voraciousness, sent his wife full powers. Everything had been arranged by a conspiracy of the King and his bride, and the Inquisition and the old aristocracy of Spain, for dismissing into instantaneous exile an aged lady who had laboured unceasingly for fifteen years in the desperate cause of the Spanish monarchy.

The Queen-Dowager, widow of Charles II., an aunt of Elizabeth Farnese, had an interview with the new queen at Saint-Jean-Pied-de-Port, as she approached Spain. The Queen-Dowager was not only a personal enemy of Madame des Ursins, but she had been thoroughly tutored by the Grand Inquisitor, Del Guidice, who was residing like herself at Bayonne, as to the advice she should tender to the Queen. Alberoni saw the latter alone at Pamplona, and with consummate art

roused the fury of the young virago to an unnecessary pitch of exasperation.

Madame des Ursins, as *camerera mayor*, had organized the Queen's household. It was arranged that the royal marriage should take place at Guadalaxara. She had a last interview alone with the King at that place, on the 22d of December, and advanced to meet the bride at Quadraque, a small village seven leagues further on. The Princesse des Ursins had not the slightest notion of what was awaiting her—even the cruel brow and scorn of the vixenish young Elizabeth Farnese as she received her obeisance were insufficient to prepare her for what was to come. There are various accounts of what took place; but the most trustworthy report relates that when left alone with Elizabeth Farnese, the latter burst forth in a torrent of reproach on the whole of her administration, accused her of the death or exile of all the great grandees who had been her enemies, and finally, lashing herself into fury, screamed for Don Antonio Amazaga, the officer of the body-guard, and told him "to put that mad woman out of her room"—to arrest her, and not to leave her till he had put her into a carriage. She then called for the groom of the royal equipages, and ordered him to get ready a carriage and to take the Princesse des Ursins off at once to Bayonne by Burgos. Amazaga represented that the King of Spain alone had the power to give such orders. She demanded with haughtiness if he had not orders from the King to obey her in everything; and Philip had indeed had the ingratitude and cowardice to give such orders, knowing full well what was intended.

A strange but a veritable object for commiseration was now the Princesse des Ursins. It was night, the eve but one before Christmas, and bitterly cold as it is only cold in central Spain and Siberia when the earth is covered with ice and snow. The driver of the Princess lost a hand with a frost-bite before morning. Nevertheless Madame des Ursins, in her eightieth year, with grey hairs, in her grand Court dress, was bundled into a carriage and started without a change of raiment, without being allowed to alter her cumbersome head-dress, without money, and without a single means of protection against the cold. Never was disgrace in the world more unforeseen, and hardly ever more undeserved. What must not the towering pride of the high-born lady, with her quick and vast intelligence, have suffered in that long and terrible Siberian ride, deprived as she was of every necessary! This was the end of the service of kings,—to be rolled off at a minute's

notice through a night of arctic severity, seated between two body-guards, without a mantle to wrap round her, and without a vestige of food or a single restorative. What emotions must have passed through the brain of this extraordinary woman during that bitter night! We may imagine, but cannot know; for she never spoke a word to either of her guards till the morning, when they stopped to refresh the horses. And so across Spain—across desert, hotelless Spain, where at that time neither bed nor food was to be had beyond such as were fit for muleteers—travelled the Princess. Her resignation was astonishing: her guards remembered it with admiration to their dying days. This dreadful journey lasted three weeks—three weeks of every kind of privation—till she reached Saint-Jean-de-Luz, on the 14th of January; and yet not a tear, not a single regret, not a single complaint at all the hardships and suffering she underwent, or at the ingratitude and rigour of the King or his new Queen, escaped her.

Such was her exit from Spain, which she had entered ten years before in triumph and in the full blaze of summer, when every town on the road from Madrid to Burgos was full of spectators assembled from the capital, and indeed from all parts of the country, to clap their hands, to wave *sombreros*, and to shout her a welcome back to Spain,—when the King and Queen themselves advanced two leagues from the capital to meet her and embrace her with affection.

What need to relate the subsequent neglect she met with from the moribund Louis XIV. and Madame de Maintenon on her arrival in France? She who had lived in royal state in Madrid, with guards in her antechamber and about her carriage, was reduced at Versailles, whither she went to have a solitary audience with the King, to lodge with the wife of a clerk of the office of foreign affairs.

She finally retired to Rome, the congenial retreat of fallen greatness, where she received immense respect from the Pope and cardinals; where, too, she received some tokens of consideration from Philip V. as atonement for the past. There she lived in intimacy with the exiled and disgraced race of Stuart; and there ultimately she came face to face with both Del Guidice and Alberoni, the authors of her disgrace, both vagrant and in exile; and there she died, with her lucid intelligence vigorous and active, in 1722, in her eighty-seventh year.

The pages of St. Simon, where he describes his interviews with Madame des

Ursins, are among the most curious of his Memoirs; and although not personally inclined towards her, on account of his relations with her enemy the Regent, who had been guilty of treasonable plots against the throne of Philip V., yet he does full justice

to her courage, her powers of application, and her wonderful intelligence; and declared that "her life deserved to be written, since it would hold a place among the most curious portions of the history of the time in which she lived."

ONE WOULD HAVE IMAGINED that the word "linger" had long been in general use. It is, indeed, often found in Shakspeare, and is used three times in the English Bible. It comes from a Teutonic verb, signifying to prolong; although it has been suggested that it is simply a variation of the word longer, and means to make the time longer in doing a thing. Whatever its derivation, it is a household word, and one of good repute. And yet, at one time, it would seem as though it were a word that must be relegated to the category of Oxford slang; for, in a rare poetical work, called "*Aesop at Oxford*," published in the year 1709, is the following verse : —

" Newland the beadle looked askue,
And taking more than was his due,
As double fees were stated —
Cry'd 'Joy, joy to you in your gown;
You may now linger round the town,
For you're matriculated.' "

And to the emphasised word "linger" there is this foot-note : — "An Oxford word for loitering," as though its use were peculiar to the students of that university. Dryden's "Fables" had been published ten years before this "*Aesop at Oxford*," and the poet has this couplet : —

" 'Tis long since I, for my celestial wife,
Loath'd by the gods, have dragg'd a ling'ring life."

From Chambers' Journal.
THE DAFFODIL.

FOREMOST among the flowers of Spring,
Welcome the bonnie daffodil,
Before the budding cowslips ring
Their belts on dale and hill.
It comes as though in haste to greet
The earliest sunbeams of March,
That call the violets up to meet
The young wreaths of the larch;

Before the wild spring gales are still,
Cometh the hardy daffodil!

Where in the water's cool depth dwells
The quiet shadow of the skies,
Beside old mossy village wells,
The daffodils will rise.
The fair, bright blossoms, year by year
To their established haunts they come,
When the robin's carol soundeth near
From out the black-thorn's bloom;

By peasant's hut and meadow-rill
Standeth the golden daffodil.

The daffodil! there is a charm
In that old pleasant Saxon word
(As folded buds with sunlight warm
To richer life are stirred) —
A charm to move the heart with dreams
Of sunny childhood's free glad hours,
Lost amid fields and running streams,
Dimpled with April showers,
And crofts round ivied granges still
The homes of the Spring daffodil.

In ages past, it may have stood
Upon the turf, as legends tell,
When steed and rider in their blood
Together fiercely fell;
Upon the hard-fought battle-field,
It may have been that ancient flower
Crushed 'neath the broken helm and shield
Of Percy and Glendower;
And vizard warriors wore at will
The bold crest of the daffodil.

Yet stronger, purer spells are shrined
Than aught of bygone chivalry
Or dim tradition's lore can bind,
Sweet daffodil, in thee!
About thy well-known countenance,
Thoughts, memories, unnumbered throng,
That like a glad soul-speaking glance,
Or sudden burst of song,
Have power the heart's deep chords to thrill:
Welcome, beloved daffodil!

BRONZINO'S celebrated portrait of Dianora Frescobaldi has unquestionably high merits as a work of art; but the high price which it fetched at the late sale of the San Donato collection (£600) was in a measure due to the inscription at its foot, which asserts that Dianora was the mother of "at least fifty-two children." She had never less than three at a birth, says the inscription, and we may add that there is a tradition in the Frescobaldi family that she once had six. Brand, in his "History of Newcastle," mentions, as a well-attested fact, that a weaver in Scotland had, by one wife, sixty-two children, all of whom lived to be baptized; and in Aberconway Church may still be seen a monument to the memory of Nicholas Hooker (whom we might term the Injudicious), who was himself a forty-first child, and the father of twenty-seven children by one wife.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE APPLES OF DISCORD.

SOME days later, and a chorus from the "Kennels," a grinding of wheels on the gravel, followed by a peal at the bell, disturbed four gentlemen dallying over a late luncheon at Killoden — George and Hugh Childersleigh, Lord Rushbrook, and McAlpine. The rain was descending in torrents; the party were close prisoners, and the resources of the day had to be economized.

"Who the deuce have we here?" said Hugh, drawing back his chair; "visitors, and on a day like this?"

"It looks like it," yawned Rushbrook; "that bell rings the death-knell of your afternoon rubber, McAlpine."

"No doubt whatever about an arrival. I can hear them peeling now in the hall. Well, here goes to do the hospitable," said George, rising deliberately and moving very leisurely towards the door. At that moment it was flung open, and disclosed his brother standing on the threshold.

"What, you here, Purkiss? this is an unexpected pleasure."

"I don't see why it should be then," retorted Purkiss, shortly, by no means over-charmed at the sight of the party in possession, none of whom he greatly cared for. He embraced them in a somewhat cavalier bow, returned with about equal cordiality, as he observed to George, "My father must have got my letter yesterday morning."

"I daresay he did; but, as it happens, he is away from home. Did not the servants tell you?"

"No, confound them; at least they muttered something I didn't listen to. Where is Sir Basil gone?"

"Gone to spend a week with Huskisson at Ardmore."

"He hasn't taken the girls with him?"

"To be sure he has; they'll be equally surprised and gratified to learn you regretted it."

"Pshaw! Oh, by the way," rejoined Purkiss, seemingly rather inconsequently, "I've got Hemprigge here with me. I had quite forgotten him; but he came to see you, Hugh, on important business. Really I beg your pardon, Hemprigge," he went on, turning towards the passage; "the truth is, I was annoyed, for your sake, at finding we had missed my father."

Hemprigge entered, rather black from his unceremonious reception and the cold news that had reached his ears. With all his well-tried composure he started, and was visibly put out when he found himself face to face

with the occupants of the room. It was bad enough to deal with Hugh embarrassed by an uneasy conscience, but to have the sarcastic Rushbrook, the shrewd McAlpine for witnesses of the awkward meeting, was a veritable trick of the Evil One. George Childersleigh, however, came forward with much courtesy to do the honours, and atone for his tardy welcome by an extra display of cordial hospitality. Hemprigge clung to his proffered hand like a drowning man, exhausting himself in elaborate acknowledgments of his civil commonplaces. He felt Hugh was looking on in an impatience none the less intense that he contrived to smother its outward signs; that he was watching terrier-like to spring upon him for explanations. But, at all hazards, Hemprigge must collect his thoughts, and he found his thoughts strangely slow to gather themselves at his call.

At last Hugh lost all patience and interfered: seized him by the arm and dragged him off to the window, with an "Excuse me if I claim precedence of the luncheon and other people for a moment's *tele-à-tête*, but we are all friends here, and all more or less interested in the Crédit Foncier." The truth was, he fancied nothing short of imminent disaster could have brought Hemprigge there, and that gentleman's evident reluctance to break the news confirmed him in the idea. "Well, Hemprigge," he whispered, "what has gone wrong — out with it, man — let me know the worst?"

At that moment, fond of money as Mr. Hemprigge was, he felt he would have given a trifle to be back in Lothbury.

"Oh, nothing wrong; nothing whatever, Mr. Childersleigh," he stammered.

"If so, why should you be here? Come, come, Hemprigge, don't play the child. You know me well enough to be certain I can bear the worst you have to tell."

"But upon my life, Mr. Childersleigh," repeated Hemprigge, more awkwardly embarrassed than before — it was strange the ascendancy the one man had established in the other, since those earlier days when Hemprigge rather figured as patron — "Upon my life, and I pledge you my solemn word on it, there is no misfortune whatever. It was only that Bulgarian Irrigation scheme: I felt I ought to talk it over with you in person, and the prudence of making any further advances in the meantime in the harbour works at —"

"And this is really the case, sir? This is absolutely all?"

"As I have had the honour of assuring you, sir," returned Hemprigge, with a strong effort at rallying himself, and stopping his

being ridden over rough-shod in this authoritative fashion; but he sunk his eyes before Childersleigh's cold, steady stare.

"When I left my post," resumed Childersleigh — "and it was very much at your persuasion — it was on the distinct assurance that you should attend personally to all business in my absence. Therefore nothing short of a matter of life and death should have brought you here."

"The circumstances — "

Childersleigh turned abruptly on his heel. "Now, George, I shall hand Mr. Hemprigge over to your hospitality. I see you look anxious, McAlpine, and well you may; but set your mind at rest. Everything is going prosperously, and it was nothing but a most sensitive excess of care for our interests that sent Mr. Hemprigge on his journey to the north."

One by one, the four other gentlemen sauntered out of the room, leaving the new arrivals to their meal.

"I'm really sorry, Hemprigge, I should have brought you so far on a wild-goose chase," began Purkiss, who, to do him justice, was greatly vexed for more reasons than one. "None the less so, that it seems to have excited some unpleasantness between you and that most overbearing chief of yours."

"Never mind that, Childersleigh. Perhaps he may find he has the greater reason for regret in the long run."

"I pray it may be so; but then to miss the ladies after all your trouble."

"Of a piece with my luck through all that business," returned Hemprigge gloomily. "However, one thing is gained; the party here appears to be broken up, and when they come up to town — "

"Which they will in a very few weeks at latest. You shall come to 'The Cedars' as often as you please, and manage matters as you please. So cheer up and help yourself to sherry."

"Well, what brought him here, Childersleigh, if it's a fair question?" McAlpine broke out, when Hugh joined him in another room.

"A perfectly fair question, but one I can't answer. All I can tell you is, it was not the Bulgarian Irrigation loan, as he says."

"Possibly he has some of the weaknesses as well as the vices of our common nature," suggested Rushbrook; "and simply wanted a holiday. There, I must confess, I should sympathize with him."

Hugh shook his head. "Hemprigge is as little given to holiday-making as any man I know; and this is the last time or place he'd

have taken one. No, he had some pressing reason of his own for coming — and now it becomes simple matter of business to find it out, as I infallibly shall before many weeks are over," he added, after a pause.

"When can you spare me an hour, Childersleigh?" began the subject of the conversation softly, when, a little later, Purkiss ushered him into the morning-room. He had recovered all his composure, with his usual manner of familiar deference.

Hugh look at his watch. "As it chances, I have precisely the hour you ask at your disposal, Mr. Hemprigge. At four the carriage comes to the door that takes me to Scalltown — unless, indeed, I can offer you a seat in it; or will the business keep till we meet in Lothbury?"

"You leave Killoden then?"

"Yes, for London. I sleep in Scalltown to-night; take leave of Sir Basil to-morrow morning — he is staying with a friend in the neighbourhood; and go on by the afternoon train."

All the composure Hemprigge had mustered was gone again. The undisguised contempt with which Hugh disposed of his pretence of important business, the jealousy excited by his expressed intention of taking leave of the ladies — who would go a yard out of his way to say good-by to Sir Basil? — not only made him lose his temper, but eager to show he had lost it. Mr. Hemprigge, in short, was fairly upset with his plans, and so in a measure was Hugh Childersleigh; and for once the two men mutually forgot themselves, and showed each other their hands. Hemprigge replied shortly, —

"You must be judge in the last resort, Mr. Childersleigh, of what is for the interests of the Company. You treat as a matter of no consequence the business that seemed to me worth a most inconvenient journey. Very well; the responsibility rests with you, and I leave it there, and have nothing more to say — here at least. For your kind offer of a seat, as you have done so much to lighten my mind, I shall decline it. I stay here to-night as Mr. Purkiss's guest, and to-morrow go southward by the other coast. They tell me the scenery is magnificent."

"Just as you please," returned Hugh negligently, and his eyes met those of his subordinate, now openly insubordinate for the first time; yet he scarcely regretted the event that had changed faint suspicion into something approaching certainty. At that moment he decided Hemprigge was dangerous — if he were so, it was far better he had sprung his rattles.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE OTTOMAN LOAN.

As might have been anticipated, no one who had assisted at the first meeting of the Chairman and Managing Director on their return to town, could have guessed the terms on which they parted. Each knew the other too well to be apprehensive of any awkwardness, and they met accordingly on a perfectly unembarrassed footing. Their relations were altered, of course, and now Childersleigh could congratulate himself on the absence of the friendly familiarity he had broken himself to tolerate. With the exception of one or two commonplace remarks interchanged when they were alone, as simple matter of precaution against their finding themselves together in company, their conversation limited itself strictly to business; but it was conducted with much civility, and an apparent absence of all distrust and reserve. Hemprigge was far too clever to continue cordial; even had it been more imprudent, perhaps he would have indulged himself in the luxury of being distant with the man he had cause to hate. But, in truth, he had made up his mind that coolness was his wisest tactics. He might easily convince Childersleigh his individual interests guaranteed his fidelity to those of the business; he could never hope to persuade him again of his personal devotion.

Those meetings of the Court now-a-days gave Childersleigh some uneasiness, caused him sometimes to think remorsefully of the pleasant Capua, where he had whiled away a full month of his precious time. He tried to set it down to his own over-susceptibility, yet a succession of little incidents told him his influence was imperilled, if not shaken; that he was something less than the autocrat he had been. Men who used to hear his opinions only to assent, now, while he was speaking, cast involuntary glances at Hemprigge. That gentleman may have looked more than he said, but somehow discussions arose oftener than of old, and were more prolonged. When he was prevailed upon to express his views, although he generally ended by subscribing to the proposals of the Governor, yet it was only after a most flattering review and forcible statement of the opinions of those who had opposed them. Right or wrong, Childersleigh came to the conclusion his old ally was secretly working against him; and he began to apprehend that these new-born feelings might even blind Hemprigge to his own good and the Company's. Moreover, in his self-confidence, Childersleigh believed that the nearer he came to a dictatorship, the more likely

he was to win his great match. What chance would his best speed have against the steady advance of Time towards the goal that both were nearing, if clever fellows like this accursed Hemprigge took to getting in his way, perhaps even tripping him up? Hemprigge's work was done, and he would gladly have cast him aside; but for that he acknowledged it was too soon or too late. "He came in with me, he is zealous, he has brought them all to believe in him, and with great reason; for, to give him his due, he's an exceedingly sharp fellow. To remove him then, as yet at least, is out of the question; I could scarcely ask even Rushbrook or McAlpine to second me in it. No, the only thing to be done is, to hand him back quietly to the second place, to show them all he has neither strength nor pretension to match himself with me; and, by-and-by, when I regain my strength, if I still think him worth the breaking—why, I'll do it."

If Childersleigh saw in the breach between him and Hemprigge a faint speck against the bright blue sky, no one else could detect the shadow of a cloud. Never had the Company promised more brilliantly; although that, indeed, might have been said of it on each successive day since it flashed up meteor-like from its creator's brain. Its career had been one of unchecked advance, as registered by the voice of commercial opinion, and tested by those presumably infallible barometers—the share-lists. It had ridden buoyantly on the swelling flood of prosperity, that on its broad bosom was bearing thousands to wealth. For the first time in her history, England began to awake to some glimmering knowledge of the unsuspected depth of her resources. Credit inflated itself like a monster balloon, floating to giddy heights the elastic car that seemed to have places for every one. The soft breezes that wafted it sat steady as trade-winds in fair quarters, and up in those spheres the atmosphere was so exhilarating that none were found to doubt the success of the voyage. Confidence was contagious, growing to temerity with all, to madness with some. The cool Childersleigh kept his head far better than most; but, breathing the air he did, it was impossible mortal man should altogether escape the prevailing epidemic. Nor was he quite so much of a free agent as he had been; and, to change the metaphor, three-fourths of his officers and all his crew were more or less intoxicated. Men had taken to accepting liabilities as lightly as an invitation to dinner, and the country was pledging itself pleasantly and easily for sums that would

have drained the strong boxes of the world. In spite of yourself, you were hurried along with the rest; if you made a bold effort to be singular, and tried steering by your native caution, you were altogether out of the race, and might as well drop your anchor where you were. Nearly all that man in his position could do, it must be confessed Childersleigh did. He carefully looked out for shoal water, with its ugly sunken reefs, and kept his eye upon the sky, ready to strike his sails at the first warnings of the storm. He never shared the common illusion, or believed in the arrival of a commercial millennium. He knew what others seemed to have forgotten—that these favouring gales could not possibly last forever. The best he hoped for was to use them while he might, and guard against danger when they changed.

The Company's transactions were enormous, swelling and spreading every day. The schemes it gave birth to, or fostered, proved each of them a fresh mine to its lucky shareholders. The handsome promotion money was but a modest proportion of the gain each new connection brought. The dividends declared would have seemed fabulous to any of the generations that had speculated and ruined themselves since the bursting of the South Sea Bubble; yet the grasping shareholders grumbled at the sums the prudence of the Directors insisted on setting aside for the reserve. Nay, more: the Crédit Foncier and Mobilier of Turkey seemed likely not only to be a triumphant success financially, but to be really the great moral engine Dr. Silke Reynardson had fondly dreamed. The Reverend Doctor, by the way, had attempted to get up a cabal to carry larger dividends and smaller reserves; but the influence of the Directors had outvoted him by an immense majority. However, that eloquent divine might console himself by seeing his philanthropic aspirations in a fair way of fulfilment. Sanguine politicians already spoke of the Company as a lever that might be advantageously employed for the permanent elevation of the Turkish Empire; for sapping and shaking the outworks Russia, with her Panslavonic propaganda, sought to push across the Danube. Already with its affiliated societies the Crédit Foncier was hard at work, draining and irrigating; changing swamps into cornfields, and deserts into market-gardens; running up new quarters in Constantinople, with flushed drains, and gas and water—Western luxuries—all laid on. It was deepening harbours and throwing out breakwaters in the Euxine; improving agriculture and extending commerce; snatching

trader and peasant alike from the beaks and claws of the money-lending harpies who tore at the vitals of legitimate enterprise.

— And all this done for “a consideration;” and indeed a very handsome one. Finally, the elder moneyed establishments connected with the East paid their young rival the compliment of being outrageously jealous of it—an apparently adverse circumstance of which Childersleigh resolved to take advantage, as he contrived somehow or other to do of most things.

The financial advisers of the Sultan had determined, for the twentieth time, “definitely to place the debt of the Empire on a satisfactory footing.” This time it was a question of a new 20,000,000*l.* loan; the rumours of the arrangement echoed through all the *Bourses* of Europe, and naturally were made matter of special interest and curiosity with the Court of the Crédit Foncier and Mobilier of Turkey. It was the day of the weekly meeting: the doors of the Court-room had closed on that august body, and its members, withdrawn beyond the range of vulgar eyes and ears, were disposing of the varied business before them in a *sans-façon* manner that might have scandalized the uninitiated.

• “ Well, gentlemen, anything fresh about this loan? ” began Schwartzchild.

“ Why, yes; it's settled at last, Hemprigge assures me,” replied McAlpine, taking the word—Childersleigh sat silent, busy apparently with his memorandum-book—“ all settled. Tell them what you told me, Hemprigge; you can rely on your information, I suppose? ”

“ Unquestionably, I should say; and I think you would agree with me if I were at liberty to give you my informant's name—which, unluckily, I am not. It's for 20,000,000*l.*, as we understood; the Bosphorus Bank has got it, as we expected; the preliminaries and main points are all arranged; the details will follow as a matter of course.”

“ The terms? ”

“ A Six per Cent. Stock at 67.”

“ Security? ”

“ Crown lands in Thrace, Thessaly, and Epirus; Port-dues of Smyrna, Beyrouth, Tripoli, Alexandretta; salt-monopoly for Syria, &c., ” ran off Hemprigge, glibly.

“ I haven't the remotest conception what may be the worth of that guarantee, or the meaning of half its items; but, if it covers the loan satisfactorily, it seems to me it ought to be an excellent affair.”

“ Unquestionably — most undoubtedly.”

“ Then I suppose the sooner we sound

the Bank about letting us have our share in it the better. Indeed, I wonder the advances have not come from them. Eh, Mr. Governor, what do you say?"

" That it's a very gratifying sign of the times, and a proof the more of our prosperity. The Bosphorus is jealous of us, that's all."

" They can't well refuse to let us join them."

" They will refuse, however, I suspect. As you very justly remarked, if they had wished for our co-operation, the tender would have come from them, and come already. But, in my opinion, the Bank will never arrange this loan at all."

" What do you say, Hemprigge?" said Schwartzchild, turning to that gentleman. " You seem to know more about this business than any of us."

" Mr. Childersleigh may be right, as he usually is," said Hemprigge, bowing deferentially to the Governor; " although here I must venture to a certain extent to differ from him. Assuredly they do not want us; but then, pardon me, is there not a difference between their declining to make proposals to us and their refusing our overtures if we made them discreetly?"

" It would be a short-sighted policy on our part," rejoined Childersleigh, " courting a rebuff or giving them the occasion to boast we had done so."

" It will be an excellent affair, as Mr. Schwartzchild said—profitable, very profitable and creditable too," murmured Hemprigge, as if to himself, yet quite loud enough to be overheard.

" So it would be, and a monstrous pity, moreover, to let the chance slip. Eh, Thornhill, what do you say?" said Schwartzchild, taking up the Manager's soliloquy and turning to one of the merchant directors from the City, a man of great wealth and few words.

" I must say I rather agree with you, Mr. Schwartzchild. After all, business is business, and I do not know that we have the right to compromise the profits of the concern and the interest of our shareholders for the sake of a scruple of delicacy, however worthy of respect."

" I assure you it was quite as much from policy as from pride I spoke as I did," returned Childersleigh. " My idea is, if we respect ourselves and teach others to respect us, it will pay us best in the long run." He looked round the table. Even the rare assents to his proposition were given coldly and reluctantly. It was very clear he did not carry the sense of the meeting with him—another hint to him that times had changed.

He bit his lip and made an effort over himself.

" Well, gentlemen, I see you don't feel as I do; therefore, in the circumstances, there can be no question as to the course we have to follow. Which of you charges himself with the business? In the circumstances the advances must be made, of course, quietly and unofficially."

" No man could manage it like yourself, Childersleigh," rejoined Thornhill; " but that, I suppose, we cannot expect, feeling as you do."

" No, really you must excuse me. Independently of not caring to expose myself to the rebuff I foresee, I cannot afford," he added, smilingly, " to compromise my reputation for tact by the failure a half-hearted advocacy would invite."

" Then had not Mr. Hemprigge better undertake it?" suggested Schwartzchild.

" Thank you," said Hemprigge, hastily; " but there can be no doubt the Governor is right in regarding it as a matter of the utmost delicacy, and certainly I have not the pretension of succeeding when he fears failure. Besides, it should be undertaken by some one of us who has personal connections with the Board of the Bosphorus,—Mr. McAlpine, perhaps; I believe he is intimate with old Mr. Brounker, the late Member of Council at Calcutta. Mr. Brounker, I happen to know, has a great deal to say in the matter."

" I'd much rather you gave the commission to any one else," returned McAlpine. " I've no faith whatever in my own powers of negotiation; and although Brounker and I are old friends, he's apt to be short, and sure to be peppery. However, Childersleigh, as I tell you cordially, in my opinion the offer ought to be made, and I am willing to charge myself with it, gentlemen, if no one else does, as a matter of duty."

" I hope you don't mind my coming forward in this way," said McAlpine, taking his friend's arm as they stepped together into the street. " As I told you plainly, I don't agree with you. My idea is that to hold back in an affair of this sort—an affair that is become matter of public notoriety—would be straining delicacy to an excess between a couple of public companies."

" Mind you're having an opinion of your own and acting upon it?" returned Childersleigh, with his frank smile. " You can't imagine it. In any affair where honour and delicacy came in question, your opinion would shake mine. But you may remember I also rested my objection on the more practical ground, that any application

from us would be a mistake — first, because it would be certainly rejected; and secondly, because the Bank would in all likelihood never carry out the loan."

"As to the first, I daresay you may be very right. At any rate, your doubts make me feel far from sanguine. For the second, assuming what Hemprigge told us to be true, I can only repeat I cannot agree with you."

"I have reason to believe Hemprigge's information to be substantially correct; in fact, I may say I know it is."

"Then what on earth makes you speak as you do? What can possibly prevent the Bosphorus Bank carrying through the affair?"

"The Crédit Foncier and Mobilier of Turkey, McAlpine. If they refuse us a part, what should you say to our stepping in and relieving them of the whole?"

McAlpine dropped his companion's arm that he might turn and stare at him more comfortably.

"Yes," Childersleigh continued, smiling complacently; "our business is based on rational speculation, is it not? That was the idea we emphasized."

"Rational speculation — yes, certainly," retorted McAlpine, resting strongly on the "rational."

"And I am delighted to think the Bank grudges us the moderate share of gain we had a fair right to look for, because I see every reason to believe we can do very much better. I intend we shall be the lions instead of the jackals, that's all — land a haul of herrings instead of sprats, and realize heavily in cash and credit."

"I would like well to know how," exclaimed McAlpine, reverting, as usual in his excitement, to his Scotch accent and idiom.

"Simply thus. It's a long story, but I'll tell it as briefly as I can, — and I know a good deal more of the secret history than Hemprigge, although I did not care to take a committee of the whole house into my confidence. When the affair was first decided upon at Constantinople, and before it got wind here, the Porte despatched Emin Pacha to Paris as its financial agent, an old acquaintance of mine, and a very clever fellow. After much parleying — unofficially — he was in full treaty with the agents of the Bosphorus Bank, and the Bank had made all its arrangements, in the event of obtaining it on satisfactory terms, for distributing the loan chiefly among English and Frankfort capitalists. At the eleventh hour a combination of Frenchmen laid their heads together to bid against the Bospho-

rus, Lafarge and the Société Impériale de l'Orient at their heads. Emin Bey paused and waited: each day competition brought him fresh concessions and easier terms. Braithwaite, who was acting for the Bosphorus, took the alarm, as he saw the margin of profit dwindling, and his bargain, if he ever made it, likely to turn out a loss. Being a man of decision, and, in his way, a clever one, he walked straight over to Lafarge and proposed compromise and alliance against the common enemy and victim. In short, a league offensive and defensive was arranged. The Bank and the Frenchmen took advantage of the first counter-demand of the Pacha to retract all they had offered, and, executing a strategical movement in retreat, took up the earlier position occupied by the Bank before their ruinous concurrence set in. The Pacha was furious, and so was the Porte. Emin had led his Government to hope for marvellously cheap money and an unlooked-for accession of credit; for himself he had been dreaming of endless honour and glory, and heaven knows what more substantial. Now, in place of the Order of the Mejidieh, they would certainly have sent him the bowstring if it had not luckily become an anachronism. As it was, disgrace, destitution, and recall were imminent, and it became matter of life and death for him to make, at any rate, better terms than the last the combined Shylocks were offering. So the matter rests. The capitalists believe, and Emin fears, they have nothing to do but wait. I propose that these better terms shall come from us; pique and a sense of injury will make both him and his Government eager to deal in another market. One and the other would make heavy sacrifices rather than enrich the men who have been pressuring them so unconsciously."

"Well, Childersleigh," broke in McAlpine, "you're the man to make a spoon or spoil a horn, as we say in the north, only take care it isn't spoiling the horn this time. Remember, we've never done anything on the scale before, and you'll be forgetting, too, that we must be finding good strong creditable houses to bear the burden with us. Unless anger has made him lose his head, we shall have some trouble in persuading this Emin Pacha we can carry through his affair with a wet finger for him."

"All very true, only I must say you're not over-flattering in taking for granted I had overlooked it. Why, it's all as good as provided for down to the minutest details, and I intend it shall place us in a position to deal with any sums of money in

future. Fortunately, our rivals have been working hard, smoothing all difficulties out of our way. When the Bosphorus people hoped to secure the whole 20,000,000*l.* for themselves, they arranged to allot it, as I told you, among their home and foreign capitalists, reserving the lion's share for themselves. Afterwards, when they had to part with the half to the Frenchmen, instead of consenting to reduce their own share in common with what then they had assigned to their backers, they most short-sightedly insisted on the others being the sole sufferers, pretending the old bargain was off, and a new one on. The men they threw over were as much disgusted as Emin Bey himself, and now, like him, they only want an opportunity to be revenged. That revenge I propose to tender them, paying them a *douceur* for accepting it. They shall pocket the very sum the sharp-dealing gentlemen of the Bosphorus originally offered them. What do you say to it all?"

"That I had not the most remote conception of the brilliant audacity of your genius, my dear fellow. They are good names, those associates you propose for us, I suppose?"

"Passable. Look here: Blumenthal's ought to have 3,000,000*l.*; Wright, Currie and Wright, as much; Koch and Herrenhausen, 2,000,000*l.*; then there are Baron Schmidt, Rausch and Zimmerman, Mildmays."

"Capital, capital! but you haven't spoken to them, and, by Jove! why I utterly forgot the commission I have undertaken, and so have you."

"Quite true, and there is no time to be lost in setting about it. You must act promptly and be refused at once, or by tomorrow morning at latest."

"Mr. Childersleigh! Hugh!"

"Pooh, pooh, my dear McAlpine, don't look outraged. You don't fancy I ask you to throw the Board over? I told you in the Court-room, I repeated it in the street, that your failure was a foregone conclusion. As you have decided on making the attempt, you must see yourself that, in the interest of the Company, and in any case, the sooner it is made the better."

McAlpine laughed. "You're not far out there, happen what may. But mind you this, Childersleigh: I'll do my very best with Brounker. Surely it's not likely I'll happen on him in a pleasant temper; but suppose he refuse, it will take some time communicating with all these houses?"

"I'll undertake to have the answer of the London men within twenty-four hours of your bringing me his refusal. A confi-

dential agent of mine, sharp as steel and close as wax, started yesterday for Frankfort with full credentials, and a cypher in which we can communicate by telegraph. Mustapha Pacha and Rushbrook are in Paris — his lordship feting Emin Pacha and learning the progress of negotiations, of which the Turk makes little secret. Matters once in train here, I shall go over myself and see him in person. If you will only undertake the charge of the affair in the City during my absence, we shall be prepared at all points, and nothing, I trust and believe, can stop us in pushing it through; there will be nothing left to be done but sing the paens of victory and pocket the gains."

"Stop one moment, Childersleigh. All this is very well; but don't forget you are acting without any authority from the Board."

"True, and I remember it perfectly. But it just came to this: If I had gone to them to ask for powers, I question greatly whether I should have got them, and nearly certainly the matter would have taken wind. It will be quite another thing when I bring it before them all cut and dried, with its fascinating figures in black and white. The absolute necessity for speed and secrecy must make an excuse they can never refuse to accept, especially when the pill is so handsomely gilded. If the worst come to the worst, and any discussion be raised, I shall look to my friends to rally round me and pull me through, and you must help us there."

"Surely, you may trust us. You're right enough, however, I dare say. Bringing such good news and offering the Company such a prize, they'd forgive you much more than that. But when Blumenthal and those others get to questioning you about your powers to treat?"

"I shall make a perfectly clean breast of it, tell them some of the leading Directors are in the secret, and pledge my connection with the Company for the Board ratifying anything I do. In fact, I should resign my chairmanship and sell my shares forthwith were the ratification refused."

"You risk a great deal in this business, Hugh, if you risk that," said McAlpine.

"Really next to nothing at all, for the game is as good as won before it is played. Even were it less certain, the profits are worth the risks, — well worth them," he muttered reflectively: "this business ought to make me."

"I pray devoutly it may," responded McAlpine warmly; "and now for my part

of it, since it appears I must stoop that you may conquer."

Hugh's predictions fulfilled themselves from point to point, nor did the result of the interview with Brounker falsify McAlpine's estimate of his friend's temper. The old Indian, who had been chafing painfully during the whole course of the dilatory negotiation, fired at McAlpine's referring to it, and positively flared when he learned the object with which he had come. The envoy at once salved his conscience and served his friend Childersleigh by an attempt at arguing the matter, which ended in Brounker not only flatly refusing to be the channel of communication with his colleagues, but pledging his personal credit to boot that the Crédit Foncier of Turkey should never have one shilling's-worth of the original scrip. The usually fervid-feeling Highlander accepted the discourteous ultimatum with the mildness of a seraph, and went off to report failure to his leader, joy in his heart and a pleasant twinkle in his eye.

Then, indeed, fairly set free to act, Hugh precipitated himself into the campaign. He showed a genius for strategy and a talent for tactics, an unflagging energy, an exhilarating sense of versatile power, that were all his own. The telegraph wires went flashing telegrams about the great European temples of Mammon; bearers of trusty messengers bore precious packets by express-trains; great moneyed names on the Continent for the first time acknowledged a common tie and brotherhood with this rising young association, whose head showed a power of combination so happy and daring. As for that head himself, if the officials of the Company, from the Managing Director to the messengers, whispered over their assiduous Governor's frequent absences, elsewhere he seemed omnipresent: now closeted in the City with some eminent capitalist; now opening and answering dispatches in Harley Street; now starting coastwards in the down mail; now lunching, *tête-à-tête*, in London with some wary individual who claimed a siege in form before surrender; now being entertained in the *cercles* and *restaurants* of Paris by Parisians of distinction. Everywhere and always, through restless days and sleepless nights, with the same quiet, urbane manner, the same readiness of reply and felicity of retort, the same precision of fact and thought. Rising with the occasion, more than ever might he pride himself on the happy art of imposing his imperious will and well-defined ideas on those pompous potterers who fondly fancied he was accepting theirs, of persuading men who rated themselves among the field-mar-

shals of the great army of finance, to carry a rifle in his ranks.

The day for the weekly meeting of the Court of the Crédit Foncier and Mobilier of Turkey had come round again. Yet, marvellous to relate, when it was assembled at half-past two in the afternoon, the Governor was absent, and his absence unaccounted for. Except during his stay in the Highlands, it was the first time such an incident had happened. For eight-and-forty hours no one had ever seen him, and no one professed to know what had become of him. The Managing Director shook his head. It must have been quite an oversight with the Governor — a very unusual one, he must say — but it was singularly unfortunate he had made no sort of arrangements with a view to such a contingency, for he alone had the key to much of the business that ought to come on in due course. "In finance as in politics," Mr. Hemprigge went on sententiously to observe, "the most enlightened personal government has its drawbacks as well as its advantages;" and the majority of the meeting grumbled and gloomed assent to the invidious sentiment. McAlpine alone remained tranquil and impassive, but he sat silent. Hemprigge was studiously melancholy; the zealous Manager was so clearly put out at the delays interposed to the business he was so much rapt up in.

This affair of the loan, moreover, had predisposed many of the gentlemen to irritation against Hugh. They all knew McAlpine had broken down in his mission, and with the inconsistency of human nature were disposed to visit on Childersleigh the fulfilment of his foreboding of failure. A fixed opinion like his was, with a man in his position, apt to justify itself as a matter of course; had he formed a different one, he would have undertaken himself the task of arrangement; and had he done so, he must have succeeded there as he had so often before. His caprices and prejudices, then, had robbed the Company of so many thousands of net gain, of a clear percentage of its next dividend. Thus Hugh's very merits, rising in judgment against him, became his condemnation, now that the tide of his popularity was turning. No wonder Hemprigge found it hard to look so sad as he did: it was more astonishing the cloud did not flit over from his face to that of McAlpine.

"After all," observed the latter gentleman, in depreciation of some inarticulate murmurs and vague grumbling, — "after all, we have lost nothing. The last accounts are that the loan stands in abeyance for the

present : that there is a hitch somewhere that can't be got over."

"Nonsense, McAlpine. You know better than that," retorted Schwartzchild. "The Sultan must find money somehow for his next dividends, and he knows he's not likely to get it except from the men he's treating with now. Besides, time presses, and he can't afford to open up the whole lengthy business again. No, depend upon it the Bank knows what it's about, and Braithwaite's only turning the screw because he believes he can squeeze out harder terms. The delay means we shall lose more than we thought, that's where it is."

"If Braithwaite has been screwing them," broke in Theologos, who had come in while the orator was declaiming, "he must have overdone it. There's a measure in all things, as he seems to have found out. At least, they've just posted a telegram at the Stock Exchange, authoritatively announcing that the whole negotiation is at an end for good."

"A barefaced *canard*, no doubt," exclaimed Hemprigge.

"People believe it at any rate ; they're buying Turks fast. They went up three-quarters the ten minutes I was waiting there."

"Let me remind you," interrupted Mr. Thornhill, "that time is passing, and all this utterly beside the business of the day."

"Thornhill's quite right," said McAlpine, hastily. "What's the first thing before us, Mr. Hemprigge ?"

"I can tell you what it ought to have been, sir : a question of promoting a Bonded Warehouse Company at Galatz ; but with regard to that this absence of the Governor is especially unfortunate —"

"I regret deeply, Mr. Hemprigge, it should have been so, and have to tender you, gentlemen, my heartfelt apologies," interrupted a familiar voice from behind, making the speaker start as if the new comer had run a gimlet into his shoulders. It was the Governor in person, who had entered quietly, unannounced and unobserved.

Mr. Hemprigge recovered himself, and extended a hand of welcome. Mr. Childersleigh touched it on his way to take possession of the chair, which McAlpine, who had been occupying it, vacated in his favour. With him he exchanged a warm and significant pressure, and then, after some promiscuous salutations, addressed himself to the meeting.

"Yes, gentlemen, I owe you many apologies for a somewhat prolonged absence, and a seeming neglect of our interests ; that it was but seeming, I hope you have done

me the justice to believe, or else I have laboured to little purpose since first we knew each other."

Hugh saw many of the faces around him look more or less consciously guilty ; while some of them drooped under the clear look he directed rapidly on each in turn. "For," he went on, "it has been your business, or rather ours, which has made me since our last meeting so remiss in my attendance here. It was our business took me to Paris, whence I have just returned ; and, as ill-luck would have it, I was detained by the steamer breaking her engine in mid-channel. I should have telegraphed the accident from Dover could I have foreseen the second delay at Redhill, where we were shunted for half-an-hour."

"You didn't chance to hear anything in Paris about the loan?" demanded Schwartzchild. "They have a report here that the Bosphorus Bank has broken with the Turkish Government."

"The report is true, Mr. Schwartzchild : I can answer for it : and I was just about to suggest we should begin by disposing of this matter of the loan."

"But the loan isn't before the meeting. What more can be said about it?" observed Schwartzchild. "Perhaps it might have been as well had we taken your advice and never moved in it ; but let by-gones be by-gones ; it's no use crying over spilled milk."

"As things have turned out, Mr. Childersleigh was fortunate as usual in his forecast of the course matters were to take," observed Hemprigge, blandly ; "but," he added, with an air of profound sagacity, "as it must inevitably come on again sooner or later, perhaps in the altered circumstances he might be prevailed on to reconsider his decision, and approach the Bosphorus Bank as our representative, with a view to urging our participation in any future arrangements. I may be wrong, Mr. Childersleigh," turning to the Governor with assumed humility ; "but I almost fear you underrate the importance of a rising establishment like this being altogether excluded from an affair like that. Now, for my part, I consider even any pecuniary profit of very secondary consequence compared to the credit we may gain or lose."

An approving hum assured Mr. Hemprigge he had the feeling of the Court with him, consequently that the Governor's policy of isolation was generally condemned.

"I am delighted to find, gentlemen, you subscribe so unanimously to Mr. Hemprigge's views, for it relieves me from some anxiety. As for him, I am delighted to as-

sure him his fears are groundless; and, indeed, his ideas appeared to me so obvious, so indisputably sound, that I have ventured to act upon them, and even push them to greater lengths, in the conviction that I might rely with confidence on your approval. You have thought me disposed to throw cold water on your very natural wish to participate in the advantages of this contract. You have been inclined to condemn me as timid, capricious, and Quixotic. On the contrary, I was more grasping than you, and more ambitious; and now I am come to tell you I have secured for you all I hoped, and more. I have won for us a position we have never held before—subject, of course, to your approval. You longed for a portion of this 20,000,000*l.* Gentlemen, I can offer you the whole. I have taken upon me to sign a preliminary minute of agreement; it only waits your ratification; there it lies." And Childersleigh threw a paper on the table.

It was a veritable *coup-de-théâtre*. It would be little to say it regained him all his old popularity. If they had regarded him before with respect and admiration, now respect had become reverence, and admiration enthusiasm. He was the alchymist who offered to his adoring devotees the philosopher's stone fresh from the crucible. He was overwhelmed with flattery and congratulations, then with questions. These he answered in the amplest and most affable manner. When he had reason to be proud of everything, absolute unreserve was his gain and game; and, as he told an unaffected, unvarnished tale, he read in his hearers' faces he had taken out a fresh lease of his dictatorship.

So did Hemprigge. As Childersleigh turned to acknowledge the Manager's almost boisterous compliments, the twitch at the corner of the lips, the half-fierce, half-despairing gleam that just flickered in the eyes, did not escape him. They left him food for after-thought, for it struck him they meant something deeper than mere envious dislike. Let them mean what they might, for the moment, and in the flush of his triumph, he indulged himself in the indiscretion of despising them. Hemprigge was the servant again, and he far more the master than ever.

The moment his duties permitted it, Hemprigge made a rush for solitude. His feelings and his late congratulations were stifling him, and he needed free liberty to vent his grief and spite. A rapid walk, which carried him unconsciously far into the northern suburbs, did something to calm him; and when he hailed a cab to return,

hope and courage were already reviving and finding voice within him. "He marks the first game, and scores tricks on the second," was his reflection, as he mounted; "yet I'd take short odds even now he never wins the rubber."

CHAPTER XXV.

FRIENDS IN COUNCIL.

SINCE Hugh's last encounter with Hooker, in the corridor leading to Hemprigge's room, the mysterious visits of the ex-butler had been in great measure discontinued. True, they were resumed during Mr. Childersleigh's absence in Scotland, but only to cease again on his return to town. There was evidently some closer tie between the two than their mutual concern in the Company Hemprigge managed, some secret which it seemed important Childersleigh should not come to suspect. When the Governor's grand *coup* had tumbled Hemprigge off the pedestal he had been so laboriously rearing bit by bit, it was Hooker, of all men, to whom the Manager chose to confide the mortification he strove to hide from the rest of his world. While the impending event was as yet not even scented by the touts and scouts of the Stock markets, Hooker shared the valuable secret with the Court of the Crédit Foncier and some dozen of distinguished capitalists. The very afternoon succeeding that in which Mr. Childersleigh received *carte blanche* from his enthusiastic colleagues to commit them as he pleased, the two men were closeted together in Mr. Hemprigge's private apartments.

Hemprigge had told everything, bared his inmost feelings to this strangely chosen confidant, with an impulsiveness and unreserve very uncharacteristic of the man, as if conscious of some solidarity of interest between them assuring him of silence and sympathy, as if it were a relief to unbosom himself to this queer confessor, who could have no power to give him absolution for the failure both were inclined to identify with sin. Generally all Hemprigge's dealings with his fellows were marked by a continual effort to mould and influence their opinions of him. Now, simply blurting out naked truths, as if babbling a soliloquy, he left Hooker to form his own. For the time being his tight-fitting mask lay at his feet, although now and again, from sheer habit, he reached down his hand to raise it and put it on.

"So Schwartzchild"—he was concluding his pitiful tale—"so Schwartzchild, who the very day before had been raving about making a change of Governor at the next

general meeting, got up and said, as he for one had to charge himself with having done Mr. Childersleigh some injustice in this matter, he was anxious to be the first to make atonement. He would beg to suggest the decided rejection of Mr. Childersleigh's proposal for joining a sub-committee to him for the purpose of carrying through the affair. He was sure they would agree with him that, on the contrary, they could do no better than leave Mr. Childersleigh to manage alone and unfettered all he had so well commenced."

"And the Court — what did they say to that?"

"Behaved like fools, or children. Assented with acclamation. Whereupon Childersleigh thanked them with that grand silky manner of his that winds the world round his fingers as long as all is going smooth; but he insisted on a colleague, for his own satisfaction forsooth, only begging them to let him avail himself of their flattering confidence, so far as to make the choice himself."

"He named McAlpine or Rolfganger, I suppose — one of his own clique, or a dummy?"

"Not a bit of it," returned Hemprigge, with a look of contempt at his companion's want of intelligence. "Of course he pitched on Schwartzchild. Don't you see, it was his game to throw pepper in their eyes? — it had an air of generosity about it; and then he knew as well as I did that Schwartzchild, in his frame of mind, and for sheer consistency's sake, would let him have his own way even more entirely than McAlpine, for instance. And think of the way that infernal Judas spoke of Childersleigh, and thought of me only a couple of days ago. Upon my soul, the folly, fickleness, and ingratitude of those men is disgusting!" moralized Hemprigge, with much bitterness. "But you say nothing," he added, suddenly breaking from the melancholy reverie he had been following, and turning sharply round on the other.

Hooker started, and roused himself too; but it was rather to bless than to breathe the curses the other evidently expected of him. At least, the first words that escaped his lips expressed an awe-struck admiration of Childersleigh. "He's a wonderful man, George; a most wonderful man," he ejaculated, deliberately subsiding again into contemplative abstraction, forgetting himself so far as to address his younger friend by his familiar Christian name. The fact was, nothing could appeal to Hooker's higher nature more irresistibly than the evidences of a superb capacity of money-making; it

addressed itself to those tendencies to hero-worship that lie latent somewhere in every man's idiosyncrasy, if you can only hit on the spell to conjure them. There was a struggle going on between Childersleigh and Hemprigge, and an identity of aims apparently enlisted Hooker on the side of the latter. Yet this speaking proof of the enemy's strength and gifts conquered his admiration for the moment, to the exclusion of all feeling for his ally, or even himself.

"Wonderful man, very likely," snapped out Hemprigge, tartly. "If he be, so much the worse for me and for us. One thing I do know — he has most accursed luck of his own." That theory of Childersleigh's luck was generally the cordial with which Hemprigge sought to inspirit himself under the overpowering sense of defeat and inferiority.

"He has a long head, a very long head," murmured Hooker, in wistful, regretful tones; "he's a shrewd, long-headed, most fortunate man." Perhaps at that moment he was lamenting the fate that had driven him to stand on the wrong horse, that had bound up his own fortunes with the losing man.

Possibly Hemprigge divined, or imagined he divined, what was passing through his brain.

"Long-headed or lucky, the party is made. His gain will be our loss, and that you know as well as I do."

"The news of this loan will send up our shares like bottled stout in summer. 'Gad!" said Hooker, springing up with an agility beyond his years and habits, and dragging at his ponderous watch-chain — "'Gad, the secret may leak out at any moment. I must be off to the Stock Exchange, and buy a dozen or so for the account."

Hemprigge laid his detaining hand on the other's arm: "You may as well spare yourself the trouble. The house will be closed long before you get there. Don't look so cut up; you can have your dozen or so of shares all the same. My man has been buying freely."

"You'll let me have a score or two, then, at this morning's market prices?"

"You said a dozen, not a score; however, dozen or score, you shall have them. Meanwhile, there are other fish frying than those sprats, and that infernal Childersleigh is hard at it."

"What! buying Crédit Fonciers, and forestalling the market? What an infamous shame, and he the Governor!" ejaculated Hooker.

Mr. Hooker had his own sliding-scale of morality, and too high a respect for his

kind to make his very moderate personal stature the standard to measure them by.

"No, not that," said Hemprigge, smiling bitterly. "He agrees with you on the point of honour, does Mr. Childersleigh. When I just hinted at it, he was up on his high horse at once, with his ridiculous fine-drawn notions about officials of a Company having no right to trade in its shares on the strength of private information. But Mr. Childersleigh, honourable as he is, is as clever at hair-splitting as other things. I've every reason to believe he means discounting the announcement of this loan in such a bearing of old Turkish stocks as a single outsider seldom tries. If I'm right, and if the speculation pays, what with that, what with the forthcoming rise in the shares,—his holdings in the Company now are very large — what with his commissions and this extension that must be given to the business, he claims Miss Childersleigh's heritage to a certainty; it's I who tell you so."

"Nonsense, George, you can't mean that!" exclaimed Hooker, getting up and pacing the room in great agitation. "Why, from the very first you always pooh-poohed the notion."

"So I did. Otherwise, do you think I'd ever have put him in the way of being rich as I have done? Perhaps I undervalued him; certainly I never dreamed of such a run of luck. Anyhow, up to yesterday I still flattered myself he'd miss it by a mile. Now my eyes are opened, and I think differently. Unless, indeed, unless —"

"Pooh, pooh! You're down on your luck to-day, nothing more."

"I am down on my luck, and with very good reason. But it's not that. No, I knew Childersleigh's affairs to a shilling when we started this infernal Company, and I've noted his incomings and watched his outgoings ever since. I am pretty sure of what he makes, and if I don't know quite so much of what he spends, still I can guess enough for all practical purposes. Oh, you may believe me," and he shook his head.

"Ah, why did you ever take him up at all, George? Why must you go and pitch upon him of all men in the world?"

"Why? Because, as you know very well," returned Hemprigge, savagely, "I saw he was the very man for my purpose, and was I not right? If it had only been matter of indifference to us whether he grew rich or not, acknowledge there never was a better hit."

"I always told you it was venturesome — a risky trifling with edge tools."

"I'll swear you never told me anything of the sort," returned Hemprigge, fiercely.

"You rubbed your hands and chuckled when I let you know I had him safe."

"Well, well, perhaps so. It doesn't signify a bit arguing," said Hooker, in some confusion; "and you mustn't forget that happen what may later, he coins gold for us in the meantime."

"You never could see an inch beyond the farthing dip you carry in your brain to grope your way by; and to have a shilling to-day you'd risk the certainty of a sovereign to-morrow," rejoined Hemprigge contemptuously and eloquently metaphorical. "Don't you see it's my curse that this man's prosperity and mine are bound up together; and I'm like the man whose life hangs on the enemy's he'd give half the world to murder? If I injure the Crédit Foncier I open my own veins; every shilling I take from it is blood of my own; and yet if things go on prospering, in another year — in less than a year — he makes good his claim to all that money."

"Take shillings from the Crédit Foncier!" said Hooker, opening his eyes. "What can you be speaking of? Why, happen what may, the income you draw from the Crédit Foncier makes you wealthy; and then — I have sunk every penny of my property in the Company."

"You never will teach yourself to look to the future, then," repeated Hemprigge impatiently; "and you make your pettigaging calculations without allowing anything for hatred. Only think what it is to be jostled and foiled at every turn by the man you made yourself — laughed at and looked down upon to boot; to feel through him you have been working heart and soul to your own loss."

"I had hoped you were far too well brought up to go in for hatred," returned Mr. Hooker, shaking his head mournfully; "or for spiting other people, especially when you've got to pay the costs of doing it yourself. No, no" — and he passed from the melancholy to the indignant mood — "if you must harm Childersleigh, take care you don't hurt the Crédit Foncier — the Company I've put all my savings in!"

"I can't tell you as yet what I may do. I may be compelled to act on the spur of the moment, and at any moment. Meantime, my advice to you would be — and the advice is sound, depend upon it — sell when this new loan is brought out, and wait on. You'll make a splendid thing of it in the meantime, and be on the safe side whatever happens."

"Sell!" shrieked Hooker; "sell! with the shares rising steadily every day, and premiums on fresh promotion schemes com-

ing in every month. Sell! do you say; while every morning sees me a richer man? Sell! and give up my only pleasure, my marking the quotations of the day in the share-lists, and reading of rises in the City articles?"

" You must do as you please," returned Hemprigge coldly; " only recollect you were warned in time, and if anything should happen, don't blame me."

" What *should* happen? You don't mean to do anything to hurt the Company — to hurt my property? If I thought it, George" — and Hooker's voice trembled with emotion, and his figure dilated as he rose from his chair in all the majesty of outraged virtue — " if I thought so I'd walk straight off and put Mr. Childersleigh up to your moves."

Hemprigge looked at him queerly. " There, if you have had out all you mean to say on this subject, sit down again and change it. We row in the same boat, as you know very well, and you don't fancy, for my own sake, I'd throw you overboard. In any case the shares will be all right for some time to come, I tell you, so you needn't be in any hurry. Have you been at 'The Cedars' lately?"

" Not for some days past, and I've seen nothing of the girls since they came back. How do things stand with you in that quarter?"

" I don't well know, and I don't very greatly care. Better rather than they were, I think. That prig Purkiss gives me the run of the house. I can turn him round my finger, at any rate. One thing is, of late Childersleigh comes there very little."

" A good thing too — a great point gained — everything, indeed," rejoined Hooker, his fluttering fear of Childersleigh breaking out again, to the huge irritation of Hemprigge, who went on hastily, —

" No, it's very far from everything: if there were no Childersleigh in the world — and I'm sure I wish to heaven there were not — there's the stupid girl herself. Upon my soul, sometimes, as things are, I hesitate."

" No, no, don't say that, George, don't say that," interrupted Hooker eagerly. Strange the fascination the girl exercised over men so dissimilar. " It'll all come right yet, never fear, if you only stick to her; and she can't possibly refuse you if you go the right way to work; rich, and clever, and good-looking as you are. Next to Childersleigh — "

" Confound Childersleigh! Am I always to have that infernal name dinned into my ears and thrown in my teeth?"

" Well, well," said the other soothingly, " I meant no harm. But it was the girl we were talking of. How do you get on with her?" he asked, with a paternal interest.

" Oh, pretty tolerably. I've hunted up a common object, found a common subject of talk. You'd never guess it. I've taken up with an Institution for the Widows and Orphans of Bankers' Clerks; they were building it out by the Heath, but it had come to a standstill for want of funds. Men like Sir Basil never get past the first hundred guineas. I came to the rescue with a munificent donation, given anonymously, you understand; but Purkiss most unluckily let the cat out of the bag — ha, ha, ha! Then, having been dragged into the light, much to my disgust, I did violence to my modesty, and made the best of it. I acknowledged the profound interest I took in many similar charities, and put myself to considerable trouble in removing some legal difficulties as to the site of this one. In fact, I'm honorary secretary to the ladies' committee, and obliged, in course of business, to be in constant communication with its members. You must have seen the secretary's name figuring in the charitable advertisements?"

" My reading generally stops at the share-list and columns of advertisements," returned Hooker dryly. " Well, you've made your opportunity very cleverly, and no one knows better how to use it."

" Perhaps so; but the girls cling together like Siamese Twins. I never have three minutes of Lucy before I hear that infernal rustle of the other one's dress — I've got to know it so well. Then, though Lucy comes out of her shell, and speaks quick enough when we talk of the charity, she's back in it fast enough when she feels me treading ever so far off on the edge of delicate ground. One would fancy she was all feelers. As she sees me warm she begins to freeze."

" Do you ever meet Lord Rushbrook there?" asked Hooker, abruptly.

" Luckily Rushbrook's in Paris for the time being. With his impudent mocking manner, he's the last man next to — I mean, he's the last man I would wish to see at 'The Cedars.' "

" You're wrong there. On the contrary, from what I hear, he's the very man likely to help you to what you want. It's not for nothing I visit at 'The Cedars,' although I am shown up to the housekeeper instead of into the drawing-room. Rushbrook's sweet on Miss Maude and she on him, or will be; so they say there, at least. He fetched her out of a fog or something of

that sort, down in Scotland, and she chooses to think he saved her life."

"I heard something of it," said Hemprigge musingly. "Yes, I see: if her mind's filled with love-making of her own, she'll have the less time to bother herself about mine. If his lordship goes there much, with their present habits, Lucy will be always getting in the way, and the two girls will cool, if they don't quarrel. If Miss Childersleigh marries and leaves the house, why, Lucy will be forced to go too, or think herself so, which comes to the same thing. Trust Purkiss to make it too hot for her."

"Exactly; while my lord heats the iron for you, you stand quietly by ready to strike in when it's hot. Eh, what do you say to that advice? Now, do you tell me I can never see beyond my hand?" asked Hooker with much pride. The taunt about the farthing candle had been rankling in his breast.

"You know you put me out and made me say what I never meant. I was vexed and tried to vex you," returned Hemprigge, reaching him his hand. "Don't I always come to you for advice? Do I ever take an important step without consulting you? And that reminds me, I must be gone. Send over to-morrow morning to Lothbury and let me know how many of those shares you want. I'll send a memorandum of it to my broker's."

Thus Mr. Hemprigge's conversational tact brought to a pleasant termination a dialogue that had threatened at one time to end abruptly or disagreeably, and when he took leave of Mr. Hooker, the elder gentleman's face was beaming with its customary expression of benevolence.

CHAPTER XXVI.

LOVE AMONG THE THORNS.

HEMPRIGGE'S jealousy had foreboded a secret before there was one. It was by slow degrees it dawned on Hugh Childersleigh that Lucy was becoming a disturbing element in his life — occupying him at times to the prejudice of all he had been most bound up in. He was startled to find masses of rich brown hair casting their shadow on columns of calculation, to meet the gaze of soft hazel eyes when he cast his own into his future. Had he found romance thus blending itself with routine in those earlier days of Harley Street, when the lovely orphan had been left by fate a shuttlecock for the battledores of Hooker and fortune, he might have set it down complacently to sheer philanthropy and his good nature. But now Maude's affection had cottoned Lucy in

cider-down, and Sir Basil, who had first petted her for his daughter's sake, had come to spoil her for his own, while the subdued antipathy of Purkiss was but the dash of vinegar that gave piquancy to the sweets of her existence. Thus there was but little room left him for illusions, and what there were must have been dispelled by the more than indifference with which he saw the *rapprochement* of Maude and Rushbrook. He had broken with the feelings of the past, was he to weave new webs to embarrass his future? To steal from the Cavalier poet, was he to tangle himself in the hair and fetter himself with the eye of Lucy Winter, when his work was still undone and while he had pretty nearly the wide world to mate himself in? Was he to perpetrate a gratuitous folly, and wantonly give society reason to condole with him on an excessively bad marriage?

The practical good sense he had cultivated with an assiduity so great answered peremptorily in the negative. It warned him to be wise in time, and compromised with his strong liking for Lucy by telling him not to make her unhappy, but to keep away in the meantime from "The Cedars." Mr. Hemprigge's information, then, had been perfectly accurate, and since their return from Scotland Hugh had seen much less than usual of his Killoden friends. But it is given to no mortal to be always safe, and the *conveniences* of society must have their say in the arrangements of people who live for it. Hugh did pass an occasional evening at Hampstead, enjoyed it, and came away uneasy and remorseful. With all its slight *arrières pensées* of wasted time, the glimpses of soft domestic life at Killoden had fallen like a cool shadow across the hot rugged paths the man must struggle up who hastens to be rich. Perhaps the reaction had set in from that first flush of pleasurable excitement with which he had learned that work is a thousand times preferable to idleness. He had fallen in love with labour, and like other cases of love at first sight, a maturer acquaintance with the object of his adoration may have made him acquainted with a multitude of jarring little incompatibilities of temper. More than before it was the sense of duty that kept him steadily faithful to the ties he had formed then; that bound him to the fulfilment of those vows of success he had solemnly taken on himself. Now he felt for the time involuntarily grateful to any one who should lull him into a moment's oblivion of the hard practical details of the life he was living; who should lure him away from the thoughts of day-books and mental computations of bankers' balances —

grateful at the time and often resentful afterwards. Yet with it all he did himself and Lucy so much justice as to confess in his calmer moments that the gratitude came of his higher, the resentment of his baser nature. He told himself the secret of his warming to Lucy while he cooled for Maude lay in this — that the one girl's heart vibrated in harmony with chords in the depths of his own, the other's, with her careful training and long habits of thought, had been merely in seeming sympathy with its surface. His daily life worked no longer with its easy play of mechanism, concentrating its labour on the single purpose of winning wealth for the sake of the world. On the contrary, its daily revolution involved a perceptible struggle where something in him embarrassed him with faint remonstrances against this prostitution of his powers to unworthy ends; something that poisoned the gains and the financial game he had once set such store by; that, like the Roman's slave, whispered him in each hour of his triumph that he was not only a mortal, but a trifling and mistaken one. It was a feeble influence as yet, but he was compelled to confess to himself that it was gaining strength; and never did he feel so strongly the irksome consciousness of its being true and right and destined to prevail in the long run, as after a quiet hour slipped away in the company of Lucy. So that now, while he was his old self again — while his well-regulated mind was swinging pendulum-like in the familiar curves — when back in the City atmosphere, and in contact with men like Hemprigge, he became keenly alive to all he had to fear from that innocent-looking genius of evil, Miss Lucy Winter. It was then his common-sense used to confirm him in those good resolutions that only yielded, as we have said, to the conventionalities.

There was another aspiration too, and an elevated one, in its way, whence he drew strength and courage for combating these weaknesses — the idea of rebuilding his family fortunes, and living as his fathers had done, in his family home. As his hopes of returning to Childersleigh brightened, Hugh had paid it more frequent visits. He could accept Maxby's hospitalities without a pang, as the chances of the good-humoured contractor's speedy eviction began to harden into certainties. Now-a-days, in the prospect of speedily coming home to them, he found the old family portraits who smiled down on him from the oak panels, as he sipped his wine at the venerable old mahogany, the pleasantest of company.

When he felt a depressing sense of the vanity of earthly toils, of the emptiness of

human wishes, stealing strong upon him: when he was conscious of a yielding of the springs that had given him his grand *élan*; when he was even haunted with unwholesome visions of hermitages, angel-brightened, where, seated on the threshold in placid idleness, he might listen to the faint murmurs of the troubled world he had quitted; when perchance he dreamed in his nightmares of love and peaceful cottages, as rational people do dream, mistaking for the springs of happiness what would prove in their waking moments the bitter fountains of sorrow, — then he used to seek his favourite and unfailing tonic among the old oaks of Childersleigh Park. The church paths that crossed it were free to him with all the world, and thither he used to go, unembarrassed by the friendly presence of Marxby, and contrasting the present and its prospects with the past and its cares, would confirm in the very sanctuary of nature his wavering allegiance to Mammon. Like the giant of the old myth, in treading his mortgaged acres, he drew new strength for his grapple with the visionary promptings of unworldliness; and thus in a profounder sense than other City men, recruited for the work he had do in town, in the fresh air of the country.

Old Patterson had renewed his youth, as the rumours of the lucky Mr. Childersleigh's growing wealth assumed marvellous development at his place in Surrey. The old man stepped about more lightly among his flowers, tending his favourites with a greater zeal and interest than ever, and, in his recovered buoyancy of spirits, took to whistling in most unmusical strains his country air of "There's nae luck aboot the house."

"Deed, Mr. Hugh," he said to his master, who, coming on him unexpectedly one day, complimented him on the ease and spirit of his execution — "Deed, Mr. Hugh, I had no heart to do it as long as I thought the gudeman was gone for good, but now that we're like to have him among us again, I make the most of what's left of the black time, that I may enjoy the more my blink o' sunshine when it comes."

"A cheering bit of philosophy for us that, Patterson; but you're coming out of the shadow already. Why, man, you're an inch taller, and heaven knows how many years younger, since that morning of the funeral."

"Ay, there's many a thing happened sin' that sour winter morning, thank God; and I wouldn't say but what, among your grand other doings, you've put me on another year or two. 'Od, Mr. Hugh, it's no like the great man of business they say you're become, to go burdening yourself longer

than you can help with a feckless worn-out old body," said Patterson, smiling grimly.

Hugh laughed as he stretched out his fingers for a pinch from the old man's snuff-box. "The wisest of us are sometimes left to ourselves; and, by-the-by, what I came to speak to you about now was another piece of extravagance I am thinking of. The end of the hothouses there would be the best place for a new range of pineries, would it not?"

Hugh never acknowledged to himself in so many words that he had as good as received Miss Childersleigh's money, but insensibly he came more and more to think and plan as if the inheriting it were a certainty. To be sure many men would have said that his connection with the Crédit Foncier alone might have justified his returning, if he had chosen, to his old home. But that was not Childersleigh's opinion. He had no idea of precipitating his return without carrying with him the ample means of leading a train of easy luxury; no fancy for risking a second family eclipse. It cost him little philosophy to wait. Fortune had so petted him in the last two years that he had come to pin his faith on her favours. She had been steadily filling his cup, and he hardly ever dreamed now of a slip between it and his lip.

Meantime, while he was still making strong running, and backers and layers making him the favourite in the race with time; while Lucy was tripping across the course before him, sometimes diverting his eyes and thoughts from the winning-post; while Maude, whom he had once identified with the prize, had dropped out of his life, and, busied with affairs of her own, was only watching the match among comparatively indifferent spectators — while matters were thus passing with Hugh, Lucy herself had known gnawing anxieties. The happier she had felt in her new home, the more loth she felt to leave it. Yet again she became the prey to the old curse of uncertainty; once more she began to be haunted by the old sense of desolation. After the sharp brush of buffeting that followed on Miss Childersleigh's death, she had been swept up into this sheltered nook, where she had been sunning herself pleasantly since; but, waif as she was, circumstances threatened to wash her away again into the brawling stream of life. It was not that her newfound friends had cooled to her — it was not that Maude had changed — still less was Lord Rushbrook, as Hooker had surmised, the involuntary cause of her trouble. Had it been so, she might have borne the thought of separation better. Had the ties that

bound her to them all been slowly fretting themselves through, it would have been less painful to snap them. On the contrary, Maude was never more sisterly; Sir Basil was more paternal than ever. Yet in the very affection that had adopted her, and sought to make her stay seem more natural, she only saw expulsion from the home she clung more closely to as she feared to lose it.

The lives of our personages were becoming very much a game of cross-purposes; Lucy, and that unlucky August at Killoden, seemed likely to weave the plot of a tragedy of errors. Here was honest Hempridge, only longing for an opportunity to lay his fortune at her feet and offer her a home of her own — an opportunity which she, who had neither home nor fortune, steadily denied him. Here was Hugh Childersleigh, with a task to do, and short time to do it in, wasting precious minutes in worse than profitless speculation on her feelings and fancies. And, finally, there was George Childersleigh, who would have given his very life to make her happy, apparently bent miserably upon driving her back on the wretchedness his sister had snatched her from.

Yes, Captain Childersleigh had fallen in with the prevailing fashion, and, like so many other people, was deeply in love with Miss Winter. Assuredly there was a force of fascination about her very dangerous to herself as to others. Hers was not the blaze of attraction that puts you on your guard. She stole somehow into the affections, and like the soft-voiced witch in *Thalaba*, shackled you in the gossamer bonds you never felt her twine. She was just the girl to create bitter enmities in her sex, because, when they awoke to the unsuspected influence, and in the first burst of jealousy and passion, they might with so clear a conscience tax her with treachery. She was just the girl to turn an admirer's fondness to gall, because he might so easily confound her unconscious art with heartless coquetry. Then she was so clearly distrustful of herself, that no one pretending to a knowledge of mankind, who watched her quiet manners and fatally winning ways, could well fail to credit her with accomplished hypocrisy. Even Captain Childersleigh, who had no shade of ill-nature about him, and of all living men was most likely to see an angel in the woman he worshipped, could hardly rid his remorseful mind of blasphemous suspicions, when first he openly spoke his love and had his answer. Days before, while nervously hesitating about committing his happiness to a question, the Captain had been gradually open-

ing his trenches, making his approaches more and more ostentatiously under the very eyes of the lady of his love, and supposing her amply forewarned at the moment he gave the assault, had brought himself to hope for nothing more than a mere formal resistance.

The assault had come off the morning they were to leave him behind at Killoden, to follow a few days later. Maude had gone up-stairs, and was superintending the packing; and Lucy was preparing to leave the breakfast-room to follow her, when George whispered her, in a voice that his conscience perhaps made him fancy even more significantly tremulous than it was, an entreaty for one parting turn down by the borders of the lake to the little waterfall.

"To the waterfall!—oh yes,—yes, certainly, Captain Childersleigh, if you wish it," she replied, smiling, speaking and looking, as he thought, with a hopeful embarrassment. The truth being merely that she was delighted with the idea of a farewell stroll that bright morning, when all they were going to leave looked so lovely, while she felt at the same time the path of duty led up to Maude and the maids.

George, however, put his own construction on it, and brightened accordingly, although his heart would keep thumping hard on his ribs. How he wished that noisy pack in the kennels could have been gagged, as they hailed the well-known figures with open throats, drawing on them the attention of the group of keepers and gillies who came lounging out of the neighbouring out-houses. As George acknowledged the valued dependants' greeting much more slightly than usual, he glanced back fearfully at the windows of the lodge, terribly afraid the ill-timed yelping might draw the attention of the inmates, perhaps mar the *tête-à-tête* and his plans for life. All was safe, however, and half reassured, he hurried Lucy in under cover of the pines; rather surprised she was at being denied her customary exchange of salutation with her musical circle of four-footed friends, setters, retrievers, and terriers.

Once through the little wood, and down by the lake, the path became narrow and broken, and Lucy picked her way in advance, her eyes on her thin-soled shoes, and her thoughts more concerned with her feet than anything else in the world, while her companion followed in silence, far less attentive than usual to the hundred chances of touching her hand and looking in her eyes, offered by the difficulties of the road. But once arrived on the little patch of slip-

per green, perennially watered by the breaking spray from the brawling waterfall, she had no reason to complain of his silence. With the nervous energy of a man who distrusts his own resolution, he grappled almost roughly with the subject nearest his heart, and Lucy found herself brought face to face with a proposal when she had never dreamed of love-making. Had the waterfall shot upwards in a Geyser, had a thunderbolt fallen from the cloudless sky among the flight of teal that floated among the rushes of the lake, she could scarcely have been more taken aback.

George began with a beating heart, a swelling throat, and sentences sadly deficient in prepositions, conjunctions, and those secondary parts of speech that are so helpful to lucidity of expression. But soon in his earnestness forgetting himself and his tremors, he spoke and pled with all the rude poetry and eloquence of sincerity. As he spoke and watched her out of his eager eyes, he saw a cloud settle down over the vacant astonishment on her face, and its blank surprise give way to pain. His love made him quick to read the signs he feared, and the sudden revulsion of hope and feeling stopped the rush of words, and sent them choking back on his heart. Had not that pained expression been so unmistakable, he might have taken her long silence for encouragement. The truth was she liked him so well, they had been such good friends, he had been so invariably and unostentatiously kind to her, that she hated to hurt him. Then for the moment she never asked herself what her own feelings were or might be, she only thought of Sir Basil's and his daughter's. She shuddered as she pictured their regarding her as a viper they had cherished, only to sting them just when they would feel it most. She felt as if this unwelcome proposal had made her partner in a terrible sin; as if each moment the interview lasted was plunging her deeper in crime. Certainly, except for the grace of her attitude of pitiable confusion, for the soft brightness of her eyes glittering through their tears, a reptile would have been the last similitude any one would have thought of finding for her,—least of all the only witness of the scene.

"Don't let me distress you more, Miss Winter," said George, speaking at last with a violent effort. "You have said nothing, but I have heard enough," and he turned slowly to move away.

"Oh, Captain Childersleigh," she burst out, "I never dreamed, never suspected anything of all this."

"Impossible, Miss Winter, impossible; you must have seen, must have guessed! but no," he said, asserting himself, "I know you are candour itself. My wretched ill-luck has taken you by surprise, when I hoped to have found you all prepared, and in short, when I thought I was managing so cleverly, I behaved more like an idiot than ever, — just like me. Well, have you any scrap of comfort for me? I should content myself with very little. Only say there's hope, and I'll leave you; just as much I mean," he added anxiously, "as there would be for any other fellow in the wide world, and I'll go away tolerably happy."

Lucy summoned all her courage for the explanation. As it chanced, his last words had made it easier to her.

"No, no, Captain Childersleigh," she said, sorrowfully; "it would be a miserable return for all your goodness, if I caused you one moment of doubt or uneasiness I could spare you. No, if anything in my power to promise were worth the hoping for, least of any one in the world could I promise it to you."

"Good God! what do you mean, Lucy — Miss Winter? That you could never bring yourself to care for me in any case?"

"I mean," said Lucy, blushing terribly, but speaking more firmly now, "that, happen what might, I could never listen to a son of Sir Basil's, a brother of Maude's. Just think for a moment of my position in your family, although I know your generous heart has always made you forget it."

"Your position in our family! Why, my father treats you like a daughter; Maude loves you as her sister; and I —"

"Reason the more, surely," broke in Lucy, quickly, "that I should repay their thousand benefits, their fondness, all their confidence in me, by anticipating their wishes, instead of outraging them. Pray hear me to an end," she went on, as she saw him about to break out. "No one knows better than you, that, with all his kindness to me, what you dream of now would be the last thing Sir Basil would desire for you. If you really care for me at all, help me and be frank. Is it not so?"

"If I care?" George, in his eagerness to avoid the main issue, was impulsively throwing himself into the opening Lucy had rashly made for him.

She could hardly help smiling through her tears. "I am answered, you see," she said quietly.

"My father may have other views. I have never spoken to him — he is unprepared — he might be surprised at first — but fond of you as he is — in a short time —"

"And what would be my position meanwhile, and my feelings afterwards? I know you to be unselfishness itself. Put yourself in my place. Seeing love change to dislike, perhaps, and friendship turn into suspicion; to have Maude looking coldly on me in spite of herself. Why, for nothing the world could give to me would I submit to it!" she added, impulsively.

"Nor for any one in the world?" he asked, in a sudden spasm of jealousy, shooting in a lurid flash across a mind clouded with doubt and pain. But the jealousy passed like the lightning, and, repenting his violence, he resumed with a melancholy smile, "I forget myself, Miss Winter, but you will forgive me the fault you cause yourself; and in spite of all, I will trust something to time. You cannot have the heart to rob me of all my hope."

"Trust nothing to time," she answered, with soft decision. "Believe me, time can do nothing here — not in that way, at least. But if it be any comfort to you, be sure I suffer bitterly for the pain I may inflict. I owe you so much, and it seems so hard to be made the instrument of grieving you."

Poor Lucy felt herself treading the crest of a precipice, with an ugly gulf yawning on either hand. If she was too hard, she hurt the feelings of the man to whom she had never felt so warmly, although with a warmth without the faintest tinge of love; if she became too melting and compassionate she shook his faith in her firmness, and perhaps prepared him fresh trouble. But the interview brought itself to a close somehow, and the two had never met since they parted at Killoden. George had stayed there for some time, nursing his disappointment or combating it, and then joined his regiment without passing by London. Sir Basil grumbled that his favourite son should not have paid him the established tribute of a passing day or two *en route*; and Maude wrote her brother reproachful notes, and made Lucy the confidante of her indignation. And Lucy knew herself the guilty cause of all, and felt, in her self-condemnation and despair, that she must inevitably sooner or later carry into effect her self-imposed sentence of banishment.

LIMP PEOPLE.

From The Saturday Review.
LIMP PEOPLE.

THE traitors of life are the limp, much more than the wicked—people who let things be wormed out of them rather than intentionally betray them. They repent likely enough: Judas hanged himself; but of what good is their repentance when the mischief is done? Not all the tears in the world can put out the fire when once lighted, and to hang oneself because one has betrayed another will make no difference save in the number of victims which one's own weakness has created.

Limp men are invariably under petticoat government, and it all depends on chance and the run of circumstance whose petticoat is dominant. The mother's for a long period; then the sisters'. If the wife's, there is sure to be war in the feminine camp belonging to the invertebrate commander; for such a man creates infinitely more jealousy among his womankind than the most discursive and the most unjust. He is a power, not to act, but to be used; and the woman who can hold him with the firmest grasp has necessarily the largest share of good things belonging. She can close or draw his purse-strings at pleasure; she can use his name, and mask herself behind his authority at pleasure; he is the undying Jorkins who is never without a Spenlow to set him well up in front; and we can scarcely wonder that the various female Spenlows who shoot with his bow and manipulate his circumstances are jealous of each other to a frantic pitch, regarding his limpness, as they do, as so much raw material from which they can spin out their own strength. As the mollusk has to become the prey of some one, the question simply resolves itself into Whose? the new wife's or the old sisters'? Who shall govern, sitting on his shoulders? and to whom shall he be assigned captive? He generally inclines to his wife, if she is younger than he, and has backbone of her own; and you may see a limp man of this kind, with a fringe of old-rooted female epiphytes, gradually drop one after another of the ancient stock, till at last his wife and her relations take up all the space, and are the only ones he supports. His own kith and kin go bare, while he clothes her and hers in purple and fine linen; and the fatted calves in his stalls are liberally slain for the prodigals on her side of the house, while the dutiful sons on his own get nothing better than the husks.

Another characteristic of limp people is their curious ingratitude. Give them nine-tenths of your substance, and they will turn against you if you refuse them the remaining

tenth. Lend them continually all the money you can spare, and lend in utter hopelessness of any future day of reckoning, but refrain once for your own imperative needs, and they will leave your house open-mouthed at your stinginess. To be grateful implies some kind of retentive faculty, and this is just what the limp have not got. Another characteristic of a different kind is the rashness with which they throw themselves into circumstances which they afterwards find they cannot bear. They never know how to calculate their forces, and spend the latter half of their life in regretting what they had spent the former half in endeavouring to attain, or to get rid of, as it might chance. If they marry A. they wish they had taken B. instead; as house-mistresses they turn away their servants at short notice after long complaint, and then beg them to remain if by any means they can bribe them to stay. They know nothing of that clear incisive action which sets men and women at ease with themselves, and enables them to bear consequences, be they good or ill, with dignity and resignation. A limp back-boneless creature always falls foul of conditions, whatever they may be, thinking the right side better than the left, and the left one so much nicer than the right, according to its own place of standing for the moment; and what heads plan and hands execute, lips are never weary of bemoaning. In fact the limp, like fretful babies, do not know what they want, being unconscious that the whole mischief lies in their having a vertebral column of gristle instead of one of bone. Then they spread themselves abroad, and take the world into their confidence, weep in public and rave in private, and cry aloud to the priest and the Levite passing by on the other side (may be heavily laden for their own share) to come over and help them, poor sprawling mollusks, when no man but themselves can set them upright. The confidences of the limp are told through a trumpet to all four corners of the sky, and are as easy to get at, with the very gentlest pressure, as the juice of an over-ripe grape. And no lessons of experience will ever teach them reticence, or caution in their choice of confidants. Not difficult to press into the service of any cause whatever, they are the very curse of all causes which they assume to serve. They collapse at the first touch of persecution, of misunderstanding, of harsh judgment, and fall abroad in hopeless panic at the mere tread of the coming foe. Always convinced by the last speaker, facile to catch and impossible to hold, they are the prizes, the decoy ducks, for which contending parties fight, perpetually oscil-

lating between the maintenance of old abuses and the advocacy of dangerous reforms; but the side to which they have pledged themselves on Monday they forsake on Tuesday under the plea of reconversion. Neither can they carry out any design of their own, if their friends take it in hand to over-persuade them. If a man of this stamp has painted a picture he can be induced to change the whole key, the central circumstance, and the principal figure, at the suggestion of a confident critic who is only a pupil in the art of which he is, at least technically, a master; if he is preaching or lecturing, he thinks more of the people he is addressing than of what he has to say, and, though impelled at times to use the scalping-knife, hopes he doesn't wound. Vehement advocates at times, these men's enthusiasm is merely temporary, and burns itself out by its own energy of expression; and how fierce soever their aspect when they ruffle their feathers and make believe to fight, one vigorous peck from their opponent proves their anatomy as that of a creature without vertebræ, pulpy, grisly, gelatinous, and limp. All things have their uses and good issues; but what portion of the general good the limp are designed to subserve is one of those mysteries to which none as yet hold the key.

From Blackwood's Magazine.

THE DIFFICULT PRECEPT.

Of all the Christian virtues we are enjoined to cultivate, I know of no one so difficult as "to love one's neighbour."

It is not to the amount of the affection I would take exception, though I am aware that in the height of the standard lies a great difficulty, and that there must be few men comparatively in the world who could transfer the stock of their self-love to the account of their neighbour. The really great difficulty of the precept is in the fact that he is your neighbour.

Why is it, and to what is it owing, that we have a natural antipathy to a Frenchman? I will not stop to dispute the proposition, which I sincerely trust no thorough Englishman will contest; but ask simply, for what other reason do we dislike him but that he is our neighbour? The man who lives next door to me must be hateful to me. I see too much and I know too little of him not to detest him. His hours of going out and coming home — his calls of business or pleasure — the errands of his man-servant and his maid-servant, and the

visits of the stranger within his gates — will, in spite of me, invade my leisure. If his pursuits are like my own, he jars on me with a rivalry; if his road in life lies quite apart, he revolts me by outraging my sympathies; if he deals with my tradesfolk, I suspect him of being better treated than I am, that he gets honester measure in his coals, and more cream in his milk; if his acquaintance runs in an humbler current than my own, I inveigh against the vulgar contact of his associates; if they who frequent him are of an order superior to my own friends, my dislike is heightened by a sense of envy. Now, had he only lived in the next street instead of next door, I had known none of these things, and his new liveries had never cost me a pang, nor had that splendid haunch of venison I saw carried in but yesterday disgusted me with my own tough mutton at dinner.

It is in the points of contact that are never touches of cohesiveness, lies all the antipathy. That we are ready to forgive Russians, Germans, and Italians, scores of things we cannot put up with in the Frenchman, none will deny. It comes to this, that the man next door is positively odious from the number of times every day some feature of his life will obtrude itself on our own, and seem, out of sheer impertinence, to insist on occupying a share in our attention. The very people who ring at our bell in mistake for his are an offence; and our identity — that dear thing we cling to through all our mishaps in the world — is outraged at being confounded and mistaken for another's. And as for the little compliments and courtesies of life that, intended for him, have by an accident been left at our door, they are the dregs of all bitterness in our cup of disappointment. How came it ever to my imagination to ponder over the insignificance of my lot if it were not for that card from Buckingham Palace which a blundering messenger had dropped with me instead of next door?

That inveterate dislike that exists between Whigs and Tories is solely felt because they live in the same street, and are next door to each other; while neither has the same antipathy to the Radical, who dwells in the "stable-lane round the corner" — a vulgar dog if you like, but not a bad sort of fellow at bottom; and this is the judgment solely founded on the fact that his ways and doings are not in hourly contact with our own.

The rancour of party hatred never reached its climax till we saw the two rival factions contending to carry the same measures — that is, till they came to live side by side.

In the old days of opposite views and objects they fought their battles boldly, bravely, manfully, but there was no acrimony, for their houses were not next door. It was only in our own day that it occurred to them to become neighbours, and we see what has come of it.

So long as each hunted his own line of country, one might say that his neighbour's dogs were slow to find, and ran wildly; or the other might retort, that his pack were mostly mongrels, and never gave voice together. Still each could follow his sport without interruption, and on the whole no very serious bad feeling came of it. But now that they are driven to draw the same cover, and have only one fox between them, there's nothing too bad for each to say of the other. Mr. Disraeli declares the fox was his fox, and that if he had not hunted him before, it was because he was employed teaching some friends to ride — "educating them," he called it, to take fences and ditches they weren't used to. Mr. Gladstone denied this; that the fox had strayed out of his cover; and that he felt the unsportsmanlike conduct of his neighbour so acutely, that he would rather dispose of his pack and give up hunting for the season.

Nothing of this would have happened had each kept to his own county. All the bad feeling came of propinquity; for, be it remarked, neither of them was displeased when the Radicals came out and took a run with them.

They tell us that the law of primogeniture makes a man little affectionate to his eldest son, but full of love for his grandchild; and here it is, once more, the next-door neighbour there is no forgiving, and even he a little farther off is preferable to him! As for that old adage of the Romans, that declares "loving the same and hating the same" constitutes true friendship, I take it there never was a greater fallacy. Real sympathy is the sense of enjoyment I feel when I see my friend delighted by something I don't care for. If any one disputes my definition, let him think how inconvenient the converse would prove in our courts of divorce, and that even the most gushing heart is not bound to like a Correspondent.

Whose dog keeps me awake all night? whose daughters' duets drive me distracted half the day? whose duns come thundering

at my knocker? whose telegrams startle me from my sleep? whose whole life is it that will run Rhone-like through the placid Geneva-Lake of my existence, and by its strong current mar the grand tranquillity of my days? — My neighbour's.

When I read of the projects for bridging over the strip of sea between Dover and Calais, or the plans for tunnelling a road beneath the waters; when I hear the speculations of those who believe that, by what they call "drawing closer to France," we shall cultivate more surely the relations of friendship, and more effectually combat the mistrusts and prejudices that beset the relations between strange peoples, — when, I say, I see and hear these things, I ask myself, Where have they lived who enunciate these doctrines? What experiences have they had of life? What lesson has the world taught them, if it be not this, — That where there is no common bond of interest to bind men, no unity of pursuit or object, there is no more sure promoter of bickering, bad feeling, and dislike, than too close proximity.

I have occasional twinges of gout; lobster mayonnaise, with cucumber, washed down with iced Mosel-cup, does not agree with me as well as it used to do; nor are my morning recollections of anchovy sandwiches and "bishops" as free from repinings as once they were. "Tempora mutantur," and digestive organs "cum illis;" and there do come moments when life is crape-covered, and when in my discontent with the world I include myself, and have to own that there is not a grievance nor an ill that assails me for which I am not personally responsible, and that for every hard turn of fortune I have been an aider and abettor. At such moments as these — and of late years they have a habit of coming oftener than I care for, — at such moments as these — when I am soured with life — when I see, or think that I see, Fortune has dealt me all the small cards of the pack, and never a trump — when I feel myself walking the world's stage without a part in the comedy — scarcely a supernumerary — rather a creature that has strayed in from "the flats," and like enough to be booted off if discovered, — at such periods of existence as these, I do believe I like my neighbour pretty much like myself, and I wish him joy of the affection.

MRS. WARD's picture for the next Academy Exhibition represents one of those pathetic interviews of the Empress Josephine with the in-

fant King of Rome, which took place in the presence of her divorced husband: this one occurred at La Bagatelle.

From Nature.
THE VELOCITY OF THOUGHT.

"As quick as thought" is a common proverb, and probably not a few persons feel inclined to regard the speed of mental operations as beyond our powers of measurement. Apart, however, from these minds which take their owners so long in making up because they are so great, rough experience clearly shows that ordinary thinking does take time; and as soon as mental processes were brought to work in connection with delicate instruments and exact calculations, it became obvious that the time they consumed was a matter for serious consideration. A well-known instance of this is the "personal equation" of the astronomers. When a person watching the movement of a star, makes a signal the instant he sees it, or the instant it seems to him to cross a certain line, it is found that a definite fraction of a second always elapses between the actual falling of the image of the star on the observer's eye, and the making of the signal—a fraction, moreover, varying somewhat with different observers, and with the same observer under differing mental conditions. Of late years considerable progress has been made towards an accurate knowledge of this mental time.

A typical bodily action, involving mental effort, may be regarded as made up of three terms; of sensations travelling towards the brain, of processes thereby set up within the brain, and of resultant motor impulses travelling from the brain towards the muscles which are about to be used. Our first task is to ascertain how much time is consumed in each of these terms; we may afterwards try to measure the velocity of the various stages and parts into which each term may be further subdivided.

The velocity of motor impulses is by far the simplest case of the three, and has already been made out pretty satisfactorily. We can assert, for instance, that in frogs a motor impulse, the message of the will to the muscle, travels at about the rate of 28 metres a second, while in man it moves at about 33 metres. The method by which this result is obtained may be described in its simplest form somewhat as follows:—

The muscle which in the frog corresponds to the calf of the leg, may be prepared with about two inches of its proper nerve still attached to it. If a galvanic current be brought to bear on the nerve close to the muscle, a motor impulse is set up in the nerve, and a contraction of the muscle follows. Between the exact moment when the current breaks into the nerve, and the exact moment when the muscle begins to con-

tract, a certain time elapses. This time is measured in this way:—A blackened glass cylinder, made to revolve very rapidly, is fitted with two delicate levers, the points of which just touch the blackened surface at some little distance apart from each other. So long as the levers remain perfectly motionless, they trace on the revolving cylinder two parallel, horizontal, unbroken lines; and any movement of either is indicated at once by an upward (or downward) deviation from the horizontal line. These levers further are so arranged (as may readily be done) that the one lever is moved by the entrance of the very galvanic current which gives rise to the motor impulse in the nerve, and thus marks the beginning of that motor impulse; while the other is moved by the muscle directly this begins to contract, and thus marks the beginning of the muscular contraction. Taking note of the direction in which the cylinder is revolving, it is found that the mark of the setting-up of the motor impulse is always some little distance ahead of the mark of the muscular contraction; it only remains to be ascertained to what interval of time that distance of space on the cylinder corresponds. Did we know the actual rate at which the cylinder revolves this might be calculated, but an easier method is to bring a vibrating tuning-fork, of known pitch, to bear very lightly sideways on the cylinder, above or between the two levers. As the cylinder revolves, and the tuning-fork vibrates, the latter will mark on the former a horizontal line, made up of minute, uniform waves corresponding to the vibrations. In any given distance, as for instance in the distance between the two marks made by the levers, we may count the number of waves. These will give us the number of vibrations made by the tuning-fork in the interval; and knowing how many vibrations the tuning-fork makes in a second, we can easily tell to what fraction of a second the number of vibrations counted corresponds. Thus, if the tuning-fork vibrates 100 times a second, and in the interval between the marks of the two levers we count ten waves, we can tell that the time between the two marks, i.e. the time between the setting-up of the motor impulse and the beginning of the muscular contraction, was .1 of a second.

Having ascertained this, the next step is to repeat the experiment exactly in the same way, except that the galvanic current is brought to bear upon the nerve, not close to the muscle, but as far off as possible at the furthest point of the two inches of nerve. The motor impulse has then to travel along the two inches of nerve before

it reaches the point at which, in the former experiment, it was first set up.

On examination, it is found that the interval of time elapsing between the setting up of the motor impulse and the commencement of the muscular contraction is greater in this case than in the preceding. Suppose it is .2 of a second — we infer from this that it took the motor impulse .1 of a second to travel along the two inches of nerve : that is to say, the rate at which it travelled was one inch in 1-20 of a second.

By observations of this kind it has been firmly established that motor impulses travel along the nerves of a frog at the rate of 28 metres a second, and by a very ingenious application of the same method to the arm of a living man, Helmholtz and Baxt have ascertained that the velocity of our own motor impulses is about 33 metres a second.* Speaking roughly this may be put down as about 100 feet in a second, a speed which is surpassed by many birds on the wing, which is nearly reached by the running of fleet quadrupeds, and even by man in the movements of his arm, and which is infinitely slower than the passage of a galvanic current. This is what we might expect from what we know of the complex nature of nervous action. When a nervous impulse, set up by the act of volition, or by any other means, travels along a nerve, at each step there are many molecular changes, not only electrical, but chemical, and the analogy of the transit is not so much with that of a simple galvanic current, as with that of a telegraphic message carried along a line almost made up of repeating stations. It has been found, moreover, that the velocity of the impulse depends, to some extent, on its intensity. Weak impulses, set up by slight causes of excitement, travel more slowly than strong ones.

The contraction of a muscle offers us an excellent objective sign of the motor impulse having arrived at its destination ; and, all muscles behaving pretty much the same towards their exciting motor impulses, the results obtained by different observers show a remarkable agreement. With regard to the velocity of sensations or sensory impulses, the case is very different ; here we have no objective sign of the sensation having reached the brain, and are consequently driven to roundabout methods of research. We may attack the problem in this way.

* Quite recently M. Place has determined the rate to be 53 metres per second. This discordance is too great to be allowed to remain long unexplained, and we are very glad to hear that Helmholtz has repeated his experiments, employing a new method of experiment, the results of which we hope will soon be published.

Suppose that, say by a galvanic shock, an impression is made on the skin of the brow, and the person feeling it at once makes a signal by making or breaking a galvanic current. It is very easy to bring both currents into connection with a revolving cylinder and levers, so that we can estimate by means of a tuning-fork, as before, the time which elapses between the shock being given to the brow and the making of the signal. We shall then get the whole "physiological time," as it is called (a very bad name), taken up by the passage of the sensation from the brow to the brain, by the resulting cerebral action, including the starting of a volitional impulse, and by the passage of the impulse along the nerve of the arm and hand, together with the muscular contractions which make the signal. We may then repeat exactly as before, with the exception that the shock is applied to the foot, for instance, instead of the brow. When this is done, it is found that the whole physiological time is greater in the second case than in the first ; but the chief difference to account for the longer time is, that in the first case the sensation of the shock travels along a short tract of nerve (from the brow to the brain), and in the second case through a longer tract (from the foot to the brain). We may conclude, then, that the excess of time is taken up by the transit of the sensation through the distance by which the sensory nerves of the foot exceed in length those of the brow. And from this we can calculate the rate at which the sensation moves.

Unfortunately, however, the results obtained by this method are by no means accordant ; they vary as much as from 26 to 94 metres per second. Upon reflection, this is not to be wondered at. The skin is not equally sentient in all places, and the same shock might produce a weak shock (travelling more slowly) in one place, and a stronger one (travelling more quickly) in another.

Then, again, the mental actions involved in the making the signal may take place more readily in connection with sensations from certain parts of the body than from others. In fact, there are so many variables in the data for calculation that though the observations hitherto made seem to show that sensory impressions travel more rapidly than motor impulses (44 metres per second), we shall not greatly err if we consider the matter as yet undecided.

By a similar method of observation certain other conclusions have been arrived at, though the analysis of the particulars is not yet within our reach. Thus nearly all ob-

servers are agreed about the comparative amount of physiological time required for the sensations of sight, hearing, and touch. If, for instance, the impression to be signalled be an object seen, a sound heard, or a galvanic shock felt on the brow, while the same signal is made in all three cases, it is found that the physiological time is longest in the case of sight, shorter in the case of hearing, shortest of all in the case of touch. Between the appearance of the object seen (for instance, an electric spark) and the making of the signal, about 1.5; between the sound and the signal, 1.6; between the touch and signal, 1.7 of a second, is found to intervene.

The general fact seems quite clear and settled; but if we ask ourselves the question, why is it so? where, in the case of light for instance, does the delay take place? we meet at once with difficulties. The differences certainly cannot be accounted for by differences in length between the optic, auditory, and brow nerves. The retardation in the case of sight as compared with touch may take place in the retina during the conversion of the waves of light into visual impressions, or may be due to a specifically lower rate of conduction in the optic nerve, or may arise in the nervous centre itself through the sensations of light being imperfectly connected with the volitional mechanism in the brain put to work in the making of the signal. One observer (Wittich) has attempted to settle the first of these questions by stimulating the optic nerve, not by light, but directly by a galvanic current, and has found that the physiological time was thereby decidedly lessened; while conversely, by substituting a prick or pressure on the skin for a galvanic shock, the physiological time of touch was lengthened. But there is one element, that of intensity (which we have every reason to think makes itself felt in sensory impressions, and especially in cerebral actions even more than in motor impulses), that disturbs all these calculations, and thus causes the matter to be left in considerable uncertainty. How can we, for instance, compare the intensity of vision with that either of hearing or of touch?

The sensory term, therefore, of a complete mental action is far less clearly understood than the motor term; and we may naturally conclude that the middle cerebral term is still less known. Nevertheless, here too it is possible to arrive at general results. We can, for instance, estimate the time required for the mental operation of deciding between two or more events, and of willing to act in accordance with the de-

cision. Thus, if a galvanic shock be given to one foot, and the signal be made with the hand of the same side, a certain physiological time is consumed in the act. But if the apparatus be so arranged that the shock may be given to either foot, and it be required that the person experimenting, not knowing beforehand to which foot the shock is coming, must give the signal with the hand of the same side as the foot which receives the shock, a distinctly longer physiological time is found to be necessary. The difference between the two cases, which, according to Donders, amounts to .066, or about 1.15 of a second, gives the time taken up in the mental act of recognizing the side affected and choosing the side for the signal.

A similar method may be employed in reference to light. Thus we know the physiological time required for any one to make a signal on seeing a light. But Donders found that when matters were arranged so that a red light was to be signalled with the left hand and a white with the right, the observer not knowing which colour was about to be shown, an extension of the physiological time by .154 of a second was required for the additional mental labour. This of course was after a correction (amounting to .009 of a second) had been made for the greater facility in using the right hand.

The time thus taken up in recognizing and willing, was reduced in some further observations of Donders, by the use of a more appropriate signal. The object looked for was a letter illuminated suddenly by an electric spark, and the observer had to call out the name of the letter, his cry being registered by a phonograph, the revolving cylinder of which was also marked by the current giving rise to the electric spark.

When the observer had to choose between two letters, the physiological time was rather shorter than when the signal was made by the hand; and when a choice of five letters was presented, the time was lengthened, the duration of the mental act amounting in this case to .170 of a second.

When the exciting cause was a sound, answered by a sound, the increase of the physiological time was much shortened. Thus, the choice between two sounds and the determination to answer required about .050 of a second; while, when the choice lay between five different sounds, .088 of a second was required. In these observations two persons sat before the phonograph, one answering the other, while the voices of both were registered on the same revolving cylinder.

These observations may be regarded as

the beginnings of a new line of inquiry, and it is obvious that by a proper combination of changes various mental factors may be eliminated and their duration ascertained. For instance, when one person utters a sound, the nature of which has been previously arranged, the time elapsing before the answer is given corresponds to the time required for simple recognition and volition. When, however, the first person has leave to utter any one, say of five, given sounds, and the second person to make answer by the same sound to any and every one of the five which he thus may hear, the mental process is much more complex. There is in this case first the perception and recognition of sound, then the bare volition towards an answer, and finally the choice and combination of certain motor impulses which are to be set going, in order that the appropriate sound may be made in answer. All this latter part of the cerebral labour may, however, be reduced to a minimum by arranging that though any one of five sounds may be given out, answer shall be made to a particular one only. The respondent then puts certain parts of his brain in communication with the origin of certain outgoing nerves; he assumes the attitude, physical and mental, of one about to utter the expected sound. To use a metaphor, all the trains are laid, and there is only need for the match to be applied. When he hears any of the four sounds other than the one he has to answer, he has only to remain quiet. The mental labour actually employed when the sound at last is heard is limited almost to a recognition of the sound, and the rise of what we may venture to call a bare volitional impulse. When this is done, the time is very considerably shortened. In this way Donders found, as a mean of numerous observations, that the second of these cases required .075 of a second, and the third only .039 over and above the first. That is to say, while the complex act of recognition, rise of volitional impulse, and inauguration of an actual volition, with the setting free of co-ordinated motor impulses, took .075 of a second, the simple recognition and rise of volitional impulse took .039 only. We infer, therefore, that the full inauguration of the volition took .075—.039 = .036. In rough language, it took 1-26 of a second to think, and rather less to will.

We may fairly expect interesting and curious results from a continuation of these researches. Two sources of error have however, to be guarded against. One, and that most readily appreciated and cared for, refers to exactitude in the instruments employed; the other, far more dangerous and

less readily borne in mind, is the danger of getting wrong in drawing averages from a number of exceedingly small and variable differences.

M. FOSTER.

From The Saturday Review.
THE VOTE OF THE EIGHTH OF MAY.

THE Emperor of the French may fairly claim the result of the Plebiscitum as something in the nature of a triumph. If he is no longer the elect of eight millions, he is the elect of seven millions and a quarter; and, considering the low estimate of the Empire in 1870 when compared with 1852, he may think himself fortunate that the discrepancy between the two votes is not greater. It is true that the towns have declared against him, but then the towns have done little else than declare against him for years, and this element in the vote must have been so entirely foreseen that it is not fair to set it down to his disadvantage. So long as the army remains true to him, he may count on keeping his foot on the neck of his enemies. The towns are not the instruments through which France is at present ruled, and they will hardly be able to make head against the combined strength of rural ignorance and military fidelity. A fact of more immediate importance than the hostility of the great towns is the partial hostility of the troops. In more than one garrison the Noes appear to have been numerous; and though this unexpected display of political feeling may be quite compatible with a strict deference to professional honour, the Emperor cannot afford to be indifferent to any symptoms of defection on the part of the force by the help of which his throne has been built up. An army is a delicate instrument to play with, and Napoleon III. has not of late been quite so careful as formerly to keep his troops in good humour. He has increased their numbers, and so imported a large amount of ill-feeling from the country districts; and he has shown no intention of furnishing them with congenial employment. Instead of the strenuous exertion and the exciting chances of the field, the French soldiery have been consigned to the democratic enticements of a series of provincial Capuas. That the Emperor is not quite at ease in presence of this change in military feeling may be inferred from his letter to Marshal Canrobert. By treating the rumours which have been in circulation as to the vote of the army as fit matter for an Imperial letter, the Emperor has invested them with an immediate im-

portance which would not otherwise belong to them. The Sovereign who assures his troops that his "confidence in them has never been shaken," seems by that very assurance to hint that there has been cause enough to have shaken the confidence of any less sanguine ruler. His admiration of the "admirable firmness and cool self-command of which they have given proof in the suppression of those riots which are troubling the capital" suggests that, before the troubles began, he was not quite certain whether the admirable qualities in question would be forthcoming when they were wanted. It is difficult not to characterize the publication of this letter as a mistake. The man who tells you he is not frightened may be saying nothing more than the bare truth, but he will be fortunate if the world does not draw the inference that he was forced to brag about his courage in order to prevent his fears from being too visible. And in this case the occasion seems entirely unworthy of an Imperial manifesto. That the troops were to be trusted to put down so paltry an outbreak as that of which the northern quarter of Paris has been the scene during the evenings of this week, could never have been doubted except by some enthusiast with his constitution damaged by absinthe and his brain turned by the *Marceillaise*. The danger arising from disloyalty in the army can only become formidable when the antagonism between the people and the Empire has shown itself in a much more marked way. The soldiery who may be trusted to put down a riot may be but broken reeds in presence of a serious insurrection. As long as they have to make their choice between a settled Government and a street rabble, discipline and professional instinct will probably secure their allegiance. It is when they have to choose between two Governments, both asserting certain technical claims, that it will become doubtful how they may decide.

Still, on the supposition that the Emperor wishes to hand the crown on to his son with as little diminution as possible of its present powers, we do not see that he could have taken a wiser course than the plebiscitum. It may be that in attempting to make such a transfer he is essaying something beyond his strength, but in judging of the adaptation of means to ends the end must be taken for granted. We pointed out at the beginning of the constitutional interlude which has just come to an end in France that the chief difficulty which confronted the dynastic Liberals was that they were trying to make a constitutional Sovereign of a man for whom constitutional sovereignty has no

charms. It is very doubtful whether Napoleon III. would not have preferred abdication for himself, and the chances of the future for the Prince Imperial, to the assurance for both of such a position as that held by the Queen of England or even the Emperor of Austria. We may quarrel with the taste if we will, but we shall certainly misinterpret the Emperor of the French if we credit him with any other. Looked at in this light, his conduct during the past year will be seen to be all of a piece. He found himself last June confronted by a formidable Liberal Opposition — an Opposition which, if it were openly defied, might possibly prove too strong for him. In this difficulty he set himself to do three things. First of all, his object was to gain time in which to survey the danger closely enough to be sure of its real magnitude, and to give an opportunity to his over-timid friends to do the same office for themselves. In the next place, he wanted to test the coherence of the Liberal party, and to ascertain if he could not make capital out of their internal quarrels. Thirdly, it was important that such concessions as it was necessary to make should seem to proceed from his own mere motion, instead of being wrung from him by a Parliamentary opposition. All these objects have been triumphantly attained. Ten months of reflection have taught the frightened Imperialists that the revolution was less imminent than they had supposed, and that they had been a little hasty in assuming that nothing but a Constitutional Government could protect them against its advance. Probably the Emperor's own alarm grew a good deal less during the same interval — a process which must have been considerably helped forward by the result of the trial of Prince Pierre Bonaparte. It may be true that the Emperor's interests would have been better served by a verdict less directly in the teeth of evidence; but the very fact of its having been given in the teeth of evidence was a pretty certain sign that the class from whom the jury were taken — the very class which in the previous June had seemed bitten with a constitutional mania — had regained their old hatred of Republicanism, and could not be induced to characterize the slaughter of an Irreconcileable as an offence. The second step in the Imperial design required a partner, and a kind fortune provided one in the person of M. Emile Ollivier. It would have been simply impossible for Napoleon III. to do what he has done if there had been no other instruments at his disposal than M. Rouher or M. de Forcade la Roquette. Only a Liberal Minister could break up the Liberal party;

only M. Emile Ollivier could have played the part of Liberal Minister under a Personal government. No doubt the Emperor's hopes rose higher as he came to know M. Ollivier more intimately. If he had had M. Daru to deal with, his design could only have been carried out against the united resistance of all Liberal Frenchmen, and we do not believe that Napoleon III. would have ventured to prosecute it under such a condition as this. Concessions lose all their value if there is no one to accept them, and the granting of a Parliamentary Constitution would have failed of its purpose unless there had been a party ready, at all events, to profess a belief in it. At what precise period the Emperor conceived the idea of undoing all that he had seemed to do, by the double expedient of treating every reform as illegal which had not been ratified by a plebiscitum, and at the same time reserving to himself the sole power of invoking this supreme sanction, may long remain one of the uncertainties of contemporary history, but the further back the design is placed the easier it is to explain the Emperor's actions. When once the idea had been adopted, all need for hesitation in regard of Liberal reforms was at an end. The more that was given without the people in the first instance, the more comprehensive would be the appeal to the people in the last resort. The prerogatives of the Corps Législatif were allowed, like the gourd of the prophet, to grow to maturity in a single night, in order to point the contrast more effectively when the announcement of the plebiscitum should exhibit these same prerogatives cut down, dried up, and withered.

From The Spectator.
THE PLEBISCITE.

SEVEN-TENTHS of the adult males of France acquiesce for the present in the continuance of the Empire. Any comfort which he may receive from that acquiescence seems to us all the comfort Napoleon can derive from the result of his last appeal to the people, for every other fact connected with the plebiscitum must be more or less discouraging to one who, whatever the occasional failures of his policy, is rarely the victim of illusions. The vote has revealed to him that one-fifth at least of all Frenchmen — taking only one-third of the abstainers to be hostile — so detest his régime, that they risk alike the certainty of official anger and the chances of revolution to announce their disgust, and that this

fifth includes the majority of every great town; that, in short the vote which would be given to any government has been given to him, while the independent electorate has pronounced for his dismissal. It reveals that Paris, which in 1852 elected him by two to one — Paris, the city in which he lives, on which he has spent sums that might have built it from the foundation — Paris, the representative city of France, the one municipality in Europe which is a living, thinking, separate entity in politics, has by more than two to one expressed its desire that he should fall. And above all, it reveals that disaffection has spread into the Army, on which he has so relied, which he has so courted, with which he has accomplished so much, and has hoped to accomplish so much more. Nothing is more strangely suggestive than the identity of proportion between the vote of the people and the vote of the Army. In spite of the officers' presence, in spite of the closed barrack gates, in spite of that wonderful discipline which seems to make of obedience a nature, one-fifth of the French Army has voted the dethronement of its Sovereign. The conscription has been perfected till the Army and the people are one in sentiment as well as organization, and whenever France is unanimous the weapon of despotism will transfer itself from the individual to the nation. Paris, Lyons, Marseilles, Toulouse, Bordeaux, Rouen, and sixty thousand soldiers all for the Opposition, — well may the Republicans exult in the diffusion of their principles, and look forward eagerly to the victory for which they now need only leaders, time and moderation. The Emperor, who knows well that the *Nous* are an active, the *Ouis* only a passive voice, who understands that in France quantity is no compensation for quality even in votes, who, above all, desires to be a Caesar and not a mere tyrant, must be pondering these facts with the pained weariness which comes to men who feel that time is against them, that sooner or later defeat must come. It is defeat for the Emperor, even if his system lasts his life, for he has laboured to found, he cares to establish his dynasty, he has to the full the father's feeling for the future of his son. It must be weary work for him to learn, as he is learning, that after all his work and his success, there is hatred for him wherever there is intelligence; that his capital detests him; that as the men of the old régimes disappear, the men of his own time, men trained beneath his own rule, glide into opposition; that even his soldiers no sooner enter a great city, no sooner come within

the current of living ideas, than they are eager for his overthrow. A Hapsburg might not mind, for he is in his place by "divine right," but a Bonaparte must, for he claims to rule also "by the will of the people." The plebiscitum shows that the future is against the Bonapartes.

Nor if the Emperor has lost much, has France gained anything. She does not gain order, for the affirmative vote is not general enough to crush all opposition, while the defection of so many soldiers, and their victory in the towns, will not only embolden the Reds, but improve their moral right in their own eyes. Those incidents will inspire them to *émeutes*, for they give hope that the soldiers may not fire; while they show that within the towns Republicans have the sympathy of the population. The riots in Paris do not come to much, but they prove, with their shouts of "Vive la Ligne!" that the Revolutionists have been relieved of a dread, and that the soldiers, just as impulsive as other men, are exposed to a new temptation. The Reds, too, though a minority, are a very strong one. A million and a half of men, mainly collected in towns, can do anything; and there are a million and a half of townsmen in France who are willing to endure some suffering in order that the throne may be overturned. It is no light thing to a Revolutionist, for instance, to know that in Paris, Marseilles, and Lyons, a clear majority of the people are disaffected to the *régime*, to be able to quote official proof that in all the grand centres his opinions have been accepted by the citizens. On the other hand, constitutional liberty has gained nothing by the plebiscitum, for the vote, while nominally sanctioning Parliamentary government, really undermines it. Let us suppose for a moment that the Emperor employs the vote as M. Ollivier sometimes hints it will be employed; that he summons Liberal Ministers; that he allows free debate; that he endeavors to secure a majority in the Chamber, and still Parliamentary Government will be very unreal. The Chamber will always feel that it is not guiding the Sovereign, but debating with him; that if the question becomes serious, the Emperor can at will strike a civil *coup d'état*. A power stronger than itself has decided that the recent votes of the Chamber shall be rescinded; that Napoleon shall govern; that the majority of Members shall not be, in the words of the late King of Prussia, the "pivot of political authority." The Chamber must feel as a Chamber under a perpetual threat of dissolution, a feeling fatal alike to the dignity and the independence without

which government by a debating club must always fail. There will be a sense of unreality in the action of the majority, even if it is allowed to act, and there is little proof that it will be so allowed. The Emperor may summon back the devotees of personal power. M. Ollivier himself has professed himself impatient of discussion, interpellations, obstacles to his free action for the benefit of the people, and he may choose to make his individuality felt by inducing the majority to register his decrees. They are perfectly willing, they can appeal to the plebiscitum as their justification, and they may, and very probably will, abandon the effort for independence. Even if they do not, they can do very little. They were sent up to abolish or limit personal power, but the plebiscitum has cancelled that mandate. They may reject a law or refuse a grant, but if they do they will leave things where they were, and they can initiate nothing successfully if it is displeasing to the Emperor. Any power he may leave them he leaves them of his own will, to be exercised in an accordance more or less perfect with that will. That will may tend towards liberty, — for example, the Emperor may leave the newspapers to say very much what they please, — but it certainly does not tend towards self-government, the administration of France through responsible Ministers, and in strict accordance with her desires. Ministers cannot be responsible, for the Constitution avers that "they depend on the Emperor," and the Constitution, like the Emperor, has been sanctioned by the supreme vote. Power, in fact, cannot be secured to the Chamber except by delegation, and France is too logical to respect merely delegated power; while Chambers so limited in action, so menaced with a loss of their authority, always lose heart to insist that their vote shall be supreme. It is not supreme, and they know it, for there is a power beyond them, a legal power to which the Sovereign at his discretion can appeal. If the Emperor is to rule, Frenchmen will say, let him rule without wearying himself and us with unreal formalities.

The chance which three months ago seemed so good that France might obtain self-government without a revolution has been, therefore, destroyed by the plebiscitum, and its destruction can hardly fail to operate as a gain for the Republic. No compromise, it is clear, can be made with Napoleon. He will not consent to efface himself, to give up his exceptional position, to leave the Chamber master without appeal. Consequently, those who desire that France should be governed by a Sovereign Cham-

bet,—not merely legislated for, but governed—must break with Napoleon, must as their first step denounce the dynasty, must surrender either their cherished political ideas or their dread of radical change. That is an immense force gained for the Revolution; for although the Liberals may not be men willing to descend into the streets; they will not when once convinced that compromise is impossible help to defend the throne which is thus left to be protected by bayonets alone,—a protection which has never availed any master of France, and certainly will not avail a boy Emperor. However long it lasted, a military Government could not be perpetual in France, and the effect of this plebiscitum has been to make any peaceful method of transition almost unworkable. The Emperor and his minister may try one; but they have by this appeal deprived any possible government, except that of the Emperor himself or of the Republic, of the one necessity of governments,—stability.

From Fraser's Magazine.
THE POEMS OF DANTE GABRIEL ROSSETTI.

BY SHIRLEY.

THE name of Dante Gabriel Rossetti has been long familiar to a select minority of the public as that of a remarkable painter, critic, and translator, who from one of the quaintly built and quaintly furnished old brick houses at Chelsea which overlook the river, and date from the days of Queen Anne, has sent out a series of works which in certain respects have hardly been rivalled in our generation.

The paintings of Mr. Rossetti are not known at the Exhibition of the Royal Academy. The sort of fame that is acquired upon that fashionable promenade is not apparently the fame to which this artist aspires. But above the altars of country churches, in the magnificent galleries of the Lancashire merchants, on the walls of Oxford debating-rooms, one occasionally encounters a rare piece of delicate work in which the intensity of the colour is only equalled by the intensity of the expression, and which bears upon it the unmistakable imprint of a master's hand.

Of the merits of these paintings a foreign critic, writing some years ago, thus delivers himself:

He is a very great painter; perhaps as a colourist, he has had no rival since Titian and Veronese—

In that soft land, in that soft clime,
In the crimson evening weather—

revelled in the mellow and lustrous light of the Venetian Archipelago. Though the world scarcely knows or honours him rightly yet, it will come to do so before we die. There is a St. Catherine or St. Cecilia of his which actually glows with colour—with such a glow of gold and amethyst as sometimes burns upon the sunset Atlantic. But he is great, not alone as a colourist. He has drawn, with exquisite feeling, that vision of Queen Guinevere, which arrests Launcelot as he seeks the San Greal. The sad woman comes between the knight and the mystic guest. The head is not averted; the look is still and passionless, though sad. Passion is buried and dead, and it is only a sad spectre who warns the warrior back. It would be difficult to express in words all that that visioned face expresses. There is none of the old love and tenderness (that was over when she turned away from his caress at Arthur's grave); there is the sense of the inevitable sorrow, of the incurable shame; and yet, through it all, in those calm pitiful eyes, a profound and womanly compassion for the man who had shared her guilt, and partakes her punishment. Such a look—straight from the inmost soul as that—is greater than any victory of colour.

I have sometimes deemed it strange that this man can turn from his Hebrew kings, and his old romance, and his prostrate angels, and his golden skies, to the commonest and most simple aspect of this mean, modern life. It startles at first, as though we were to find Angelico and Hogarth working together. Here, David, the kingly minstrel, amid orange and golden blossoms, strings his harp, and Arthur sleeps beneath the yellow leaves; there, between the sun and shade, the wounded woman revels in a ghastly festival, or on the cold London pavement, in the chill London dawn, shivers drearily, as the peasant—fresh from the breezy meadowlands among which the child played in her innocent girlhood—drives his team into the sleeping city. And yet there is nothing discordant in this; both aspects are consistent with plain truth. One is drawn from the deep fountains of historical and religious feeling, where the boldest and most unreserved conventionalisms may be admitted; the other from the present, where nothing but the simple transcript is possible. In the antique, all the suggestions of the imagination may be introduced under abstract and formal forms—like the chorus in the Greek drama, an embodied commentary upon the passing transaction; while, in the modern, the same law dictates the frankest and most conscientious adherence to reality. "Signs and wonders" were familiar in the old ages of faith; but we have no creditable witches or miracle workers now; no angels resting on the rosy clouds; no "spears arrayit" upon the menacing heaven. Our story must be related, as it relates itself in the life, and from the hidden face and the averted gesture alone can the shame,

misery, humiliation, and swift remorse be gathered.

To this it is merely necessary to add that we find in his later work the same qualities that distinguished his earlier, — a purely realistic treatment combined with high imagination, — as in "The Beloved," the impressive drawing of "Hamlet and Ophelia," and that captivating picture of "Venus," where through a tangled wilderness of real roses and honeysuckles — splendid as an Arabian dream — the Goddess of Love looks out.

Mr. Rossetti has proved the fine temper of his critical faculty in the introductions prefixed to his *Translations from the Italian Poets*, and in the final chapter supplied by him to Mr. Gilchrist's *Life of William Blake the Artist*. These chapters should be read by all who are anxious to learn what close, exact, delicate and thoroughly genuine and exhaustive criticism means, — a knowledge which they will hardly acquire if they confine their reading to the *Saturday Review* or the *Athenaeum*. It is thus for instance that he determines the relation between the earlier and the later work of Dante :

It may be noted here, how necessary a knowledge of the *Vita Nuova* is to the full comprehension of the part borne by Beatrice in the *Commedia*. Moreover, it is only from the perusal of its earliest and then undivided self-communing, that we can divine the whole bitterness of wrong to such a soul as Dante's; its poignant sense of abandonment, or its deep and jealous refuge in memory. Above all, it is here that we find the first manifestations of that wisdom of obedience, that natural breath of duty, which afterwards, in the *Commedia*, lifted up a mighty voice for warning and testimony. Throughout the *Vita Nuova*, there is a strain like the first falling murmur which reaches the ear in some remote meadow and prepares us to look upon the sea.

The volume of translations from the Italian poets is one of the best translations in the language. To the illustration of Dante, Mr. Rossetti was attracted by hereditary sympathies.

In relinquishing this work (he says), which small as it is, is the only contribution I expect to make to our English knowledge of old Italy, I feel as it were divided from my youth. The first associations I have are connected with my father's devoted studies, which, from his own point of view, have done so much towards the general investigation of Dante's writing. Thus, in those early days, all around me partook of the influence of the great Florentine till, from viewing it as a national element, I also, growing older, was drawn within the circle. I trust that

from this the reader may place more confidence in a work not carelessly undertaken, though produced in the spare-time of other pursuits more closely followed. He should perhaps be told that it has occupied the leisure moments of not a few years, thus affording, often at long intervals, every opportunity for consideration and revision; and that, on the score of care at least, he has no need to mistrust it.

The translation of the *Vita Nuova* occupies the central place in the volume, and is an admirable specimen of that difficult art, — superior even in certain respects to Mr. Theodore Martin's very brilliant version. Mr. Rossetti has kept more of the original metal than Mr. Martin has succeeded in doing. The *Vita Nuova* is a piece of mediæval poetry and feeling. Now, the old forms of poetic construction are not preserved by sticking in at random a few words spelt and pronounced as Chaucer or Spenser spelt and pronounced them. Mr. Martin, however, is rather inclined to do this; and as the rest is essentially modern in sentiment and expression, the old words, — like Queen Elizabeth's ruffles on a modern beauty, — look awkward, and out of place and keeping. In Mr. Rossetti's, also, there is more literalness of thought as well as more literalness of language. Poetic language is always to some extent materialistic; and the materialism of Dante's language (being united with profound awe and passionate emotion) is more marked than any other poet's. It is only the critic who reads carefully, and weighs attentively what he reads, who will detect what is not a superficial difference merely: but such a one will be disposed to say that the sustained and weighty music of Rossetti's lines, his gravity and singleness of purpose, are more in unison with Dante's grave and reflective passion than the dash and verbal dexterity and idiomatic elegance of Mr. Martin. He has followed out — here pen in hand as elsewhere pencil in hand — the intricacies of Dante's language and Dante's thoughts with a quiet and persistent conscientiousness: a conscientiousness exactly like that of an old monk working with gold and silver and blue and crimson dyes on the initial letters of the Vulgate.

The following passages will give a fair idea of Mr. Rossetti's treatment of Dante:

I was ware of one, hoarse and tired out,
Who ask'd of me: "Hast thou not heard it said?
Thy lady, she that was so fair, is dead."

Then lifting up mine eyes, as the tears came,
I saw the angels, like a rain of manna,
In a long flight flying back heavenward;
Having a little cloud in front of them,

After the which they went and said " Hosanna ! "

And if they had said more you should have heard.

Then Love spoke thus : " Now all shall be made clear :

Come and behold our lady where she lies ; " These idle phantasies

Then carried me to see my lady dead ; And standing at her head

Her ladies put a white veil over her ; And with her was such very humbleness, That she appeared to say, " I am at peace." *

I call on Death

Even as on Sleep one calleth after strife, Saying, " Come unto me. Life sheweth grim And bare; and if one dies, I envy him."

For ever, among all my sighs which burn, There is a piteous speech

That clamours upon death continuall; Yes, unto him doth my whole spirit turn

Since first his hand did reach

My lady's life with most foul cruelty.

But from the height of woman's fairness, she,

Going up from us with the joy we had, Grew perfectly and spiritually fair;

That so she spreads even there

A light of love which makes the angels glad, And even unto their subtle minds can bring A certain awe of profound marvelling.

Beatrice is gone up into high heaven, The kingdom where the angels are at peace; And lives with them; and to her friends is dead.

Not by the frost of winter was she driven Away, like others; nor by summer-heats, But through a perfect gentleness, instead, For from the lamp of her meek lowlhead, Such an exceeding glory went up hence

That it woke wonder in the Eternal Sire,

Until a sweet desire

Eater'd him for that lovely excellency, So that He bade her to Himself aspire : Counting this weary and most evil place

Unworthy of a thing so full of grace.

Wonderfully out of the beautiful form

Soar'd her clear spirit, waxing glad the while; And is in its first home, there where it is.

Who speaks thereof, and feels not the tears warm Upon his face, must have become so vile

As to be dead to all sweet sympathies.

Out upon him ! An abject wretch like this

May not imagine anything of her, —

He needs no bitter tears for his relief.

But sighing comes, and grief,

And the desire to find no comforter

(Save only Death, who makes all sorrow brief),

To him who for a while turns in his thought How she hath been among us, and is not.

The translation of the *Vita Nuova* shows,

perhaps, the most sustained power, but in rendering the difficult and brilliant trifles of the lesser Italian poets — most arduous of any to a translator — Mr. Rossetti achieves his most remarkable success. The impressive effect of a massive work of art may be conveyed to a foreign reader, even through the medium of an indifferent translation ; but when the whole excellence of a poem lies in its dexterity and adroitness of movement, in the delicacy of its form and the fragility of its workmanship, a translation is absolutely worthless unless the translator's hand be as light, trenchant, and dexterous as the hand of the man who wrote the original. These delicious trifles, these fitful emanations of the fancy are apt to suffer irreparable injury when rudely handled. Yet see how Mr. Rossetti succeeds. This is a sonnet by Boccaccio :

OF THREE GIRLS AND OF THEIR TALK.

By a clear well, within a little field,

Full of green grass and flowers of every hue, Sat three young girls, relating (as I knew) Their loves. And each had twined a bough to shield

Her lovely face; and the green leaves did yield The golden hair their shadow; while the two Sweet colours mingled, both blown lightly through

With a soft wind for ever stirr'd and still'd.

After a little while one of them said, (I heard her) " Think ! If, ere the next hour struck,

Each of our lovers should come here to-day, Think you that we should fly or feel afraid ? " To whom the others answered, " From such luck

A girl would be a fool to run away."

These catches are by Franchi Sacchetti :

ON A FINE DAY.

" Be stirring, girls ! we ought to have a run; Look, did you ever see so fine a day ?

Fling spindles right away,

And rocks, and reels, and wools;

Now don't be fools,

To-day your spinning's done.

Up with you, up with you ! " So one by one,

They caught hands, catch who can,

Then singing, singing to the river they ran.

They ran, they ran

To the river, the river;

And the merry go-round

Carries them in a bound

To the mill o'er the river.

" Miller, miller, miller,

Weigh me this lady

And this other. Now steady ! "

" You weigh a hundred, you,

And this one weighs two. "

" Why dear, you do get stout ! "

" You think so, dear, no doubt."

"Are you in a decline?"
 "Keep your temper, and I'll keep mine."
 "Come, girls." ("O thank you, miller!")
 "We'll go home when you will."
 So, as we crossed the hill,
 A clown came down in great grief
 Crying, "Stop thief! stop thief!
 O what a wretch I am!"
 "Well, fellow, here's a clatter!
 Well, what's the matter?"
 "O Lord, O Lord, the wolf has got my lamb!"
 Now at that word of woe,
 The beauties came and clung about me so
 That if wolf had but shown himself, may be
 I too had caught a lamb that fled to me.

ON A WET DAY.

As I walk'd thinking through a little grove,
 Some girls that gather'd flowers kept passing
 me,
 Saying, "Look here! look there!" delightedly.
 "Oh here it is!" "What's that?" "A lily,
 love,
 And these are violets!"
 "Further for roses! Oh the lovely pets,
 The darling beauties! Oh the nasty thorn!
 Look here, my hand's all torn!"
 "What's that that jumps?" "Oh don't it's
 a grasshopper!"
 "Come run, come run,
 Here's bluebells!" "Oh what fun!"
 "Not that way! stop her!"
 "Yes, this way!" "Pluck them, then!"
 "Oh, I've found mushrooms! oh look here!"
 "Oh, I'm
 Quite sure that further on we'll get wild thyme."
 "Oh we shall stay too long, it's going to rain!
 There's lightning, oh there's thunder!"
 "Oh sha'n't we hear the vesper-bell, I wonder?"
 "Why, it's not nones, you silly little thing;
 And don't you hear the nightingales that sing
Fly away, O die away?"
 "I feel so funny! hush!"
 "Why, where?" "What is it then?" "Ah!
 in that bush!"
 So every girl here knocks it, shakes it, shocks it,
 Till with the stir they make
 Out skurries a great snake.
 "O Lord!" "O me!" "Alack!" "Ah me!"
 "Alack!"
 They scream, and then all run and scream again,
 And then in heavy drops down comes the rain.

Each running at the other in a fright,
 Each trying to get before the other, and crying
 And flying, stumbling, tumbling, wrong or
 right;
 One sets her knee
 There where her foot should be;
 One has her hands and dress
 All smother'd up with mud in a fine mess;
 And one gets trampled on by two or three.
 What's gathered is let fall
 About the wood, and not picked up at all.

The wreaths of flowers are scattered on the
 ground,
 And still as screaming, hustling without rest
 They run this way and that, and round and
 round,
 She thinks herself in luck who runs the best.
 I stood quite still to have a perfect view,
 And never noticed till I got wet through.

Mr. Rossetti has at length published a small volume of original poetry. We may be sure that it will excite considerable controversy — that there will be much said in praise and dispraise — that it will be vehemently admired, and perhaps even more vehemently assailed. My own opinion is that the volume is lighted by the authentic fire of the imagination, and that the poems of which it consists are almost without exception products of the high poetic faculty in certain of its highest and most intense moods. This cardinal fact being conceded, I am ready to own if required that — not free from quaintness, eccentricity, mysticism of a sort — it is a publication in certain aspects fitted to startle and perplex that British Philistine with whose features Mr. Matthew Arnold has made us familiar.

What is the highest faculty exercised in poetic composition? The question is not difficult to answer when we keep steadily in view what is its essential aim. In the sister art of painting, neither the landscape painter nor the portrait painter can be held to reach the level of the men who painted the "Transfiguration" and the "Last Judgment." The same observation may be applied to the poet. He may be a master of description, he may be a master of metaphor, he may be a master of colour, but all these avail him nothing if he has not *vision*. Form, colour, metaphor, are secondary, and not essential — they clothe but do not constitute being. The true use of an image or metaphor, for instance, is to represent or suggest through a material object a spiritual fact. A poet uses colour, too, and form, just as certain of the conditions under which being is made manifest. Life in its essence cannot be apprehended even by philosophy. The science of Ontology is a misnomer. It is in the spiritual world alone that we see face to face and know even as we are known. *Here* we see as through a glass darkly — that is to say, we see the reflection cast upon the mirror, but the object which causes the reflection is to us invisible.

Nor can poetry apprehend the pure idea. But all poetry, lyrical as well as dramatic, is an effort to make the spirit or idea visible — a lyric being the expression of individual life, a drama of the life of others.

The real pre-eminence of a poet lies therefore in his capacity to grasp the idea — in other words, in his power absolutely to realize the spirit. The poet who can come most directly in contact with the idea or emotion — without the intervention, or rather with the least intervention of forms, colours, images, and other accidental or inevitable symbols — is the truest poet, — has the “*vision and faculty divine*” most completely developed. As the most vivid spiritual communion dispenses with ritual, so is there a *colour-blindness* of the imagination, due to the intensity with which the inner light is apprehended.

The page of the modern poet glows with colour, and is crowded with metaphor. Both the excess of colour and the excess of imagery are signs of imaginative weakness. Had Alexander Smith attained what in poetry, as in theology, may be called “a living faith,” his books would not have consisted of imperfectly-connected passages, where metaphor jostles metaphor, and where the colours are laid on with tropical lavishness. It was because he had not penetrated to the core, that he took refuge in the mere accidents, of the emotion. Keats’s famous colour passage in *The Eve of St. Agnes* is, to my mind, mere surface-work compared with the pure intellectual majesty of *Hyperrion*.

In Mr. Morris’s poems the expression of the idea is somehow reached by a method of treatment apparently desultory and garrulous, yet surprisingly effective. Mr. Rossetti on the other hand, is never desultory nor garrulous. The thought is doubly distilled before it leaves his crucible. The strong wine of imagination is given us undiluted. His poems display the highest concentration of the poetic faculty. They are terse as epigrams. Slovenliness — weak expansion — words or thoughts that could be dispensed with — have no place in this wonderfully compact little volume.

Mr. Rossetti seldom uses a metaphor. There is little or no colour in his poems. He never indulges in elaborate portraiture. But the pure idea is presented to us with surpassing clearness. He realizes the emotion in the most absolute way. The fire of his imagination is a spiritual flame which consumes whatever is not essential. Even his rare use of metaphor is characteristic. It may be said that, as a general rule, metaphor is used to make thought and emotion more palpable to the sense. An emotion too fine and rare to bear direct expression is indirectly apprehended by the mind through the image of which in the spiritual world it is “the double.” Mr. Rossetti,

however, commonly uses metaphor with quite another result — with the result, namely, of making the emotion more spiritual, of investing it with a more intellectual character, of translating it into a subtler speech of the spirit.

Mr. Rossetti’s poems may be regarded as falling into three main groups — sonnets, lyrics, and ballads, in all of which this high simplicity and supreme directness are apparent.

The sonnet is the most concise form of poetic speech. It is to poetry what wit is to prose. The principle on which Wordsworth’s sonnets are constructed is very apparent — too apparent perhaps — for his constructive faculty was feeble, and he had little mental elasticity. In the first half of the poem the writer describes some scene of natural beauty or interest, then he turns away from the direct contemplation of the landscape to embody the feeling which it roused or the thought which it suggested. Such a treatment is apt to become monotonous; but Wordsworth’s sonnets are saved from monotony by their grave and sustained moral sublimity as well as by their occasionally delicate insight into the life from which their inspiration is drawn. Mr. Rossetti’s are more varied, more ardent, more animated, more intellectually original than Wordsworth’s; and the terse and concentrated felicity of his language is here, as might indeed be expected, specially noticeable. He does not appear to obey any particular sonnet law — the opening lines, indeed, generally contain the illustration which by way of association or contrast is intended to throw light upon the dominant feeling of the poem as set forth in the closing lines; but I am disposed to think that there are few sonnets in our later literature that are brighter, more vivid, more dramatic, and yet more weighty with the very essence of high feeling and thought, than the sonnets which compose *The House of Life* in this volume. One or two of the most notable are for certain reasons the least quotable; but those which I have selected will convey a fair impression of the rest. From the section of *The House of Life* devoted to love (which is indeed the master-passion of the whole volume), I cull the following.

The first is entitled “Bridal Birth,” and describes the birth of love:

As when desire, long darkling, dawns, and first
The mother looks upon the newborn child,
Even so my Lady stood at gaze and smiled
When her soul knew at length the Love it nursed.
Born with her life, creature of poignant thirst

And exquisite hunger, at her heart Love lay
 Quickening in darkness, till a voice that day
 Cried on him, and the bonds of birth were burst.
 Now, shielded in his wings, our faces yearn
 Together, as his fullgrown feet now range
 The grove, and his warm hands our couch
 prepare :
 Till to his song our bodiless souls in turn
 Be born his children, when Death's nuptial
 change
 Leaves us for light the halo of his hair.

The difference between the mere outskirts
 and the inner domain of Love's kingdom is represented in

LOVE'S LOVERS.

Some ladies love the jewels in Love's zone
 And gold-tipped darts he hath for painless play
 In idle scornful hours he flings away ;
 And some that listen to his lute's soft tone
 Do love to deem the silver praise their own :
 Some prize his blindfold sight; and there be they
 Who kissed his wings which brought him yesterday
 And took his wings to-day that he is flown.
 My lady only loves the heart of Love :
 Therefore Love's heart, my lady, hath for thee
 His bower of unimagined flower and tree :
 There kneels he now, and all-anhungered of Thine eyes grey-lit in shadowing hair above,
 Seals with thy mouth his immortality.

The poet-painter thus identifies himself with the portrait of his lady :

O Lord of all compassionate control,
 O Love! let this my Lady's picture glow
 Under my hand to praise her name, and show
 Even of her inner self the perfect whole :
 That he who sees her beauty's furthest goal,
 Beyond the light that the sweet glances throw
 And refulgent wave of the sweet smile, may know
 The very sky and sea-line of her soul.
 Lo! it is done. Above the long lithe throat
 The mouth's mould testifies of voice and kiss,
 The shadowed eyes remember and foresee.
 Her face is made her shrine. Let all men note
 That in all years (O Love, thy gift is this!)
 They that would look on her must come to me.

This is the narrative of

A DAY OF LOVE.

Those envied places which do know her well,
 And are so scornful of this lonely place,
 Even now for once are emptied of her grace :
 Nowhere but here she is: and while Love's spell
 From his predominant presence doth compel
 All alien hours, an outworn populace,
 The hours of Love fill full the echoing space
 With sweet confederate music favourable,
 Now many memories make solicitous
 The delicate love-lines of her mouth, till, lit
 With quivering fire, the words take wing from
 it :

As here between our kisses we sit thus
 Speaking of things remembered, and so sit
 Speechless while things forgotten call to us.

This on "Broken Music" is very subtle
 and exquisite :

The mother will not turn, who thinks she hears
 Her nursling's speech first grow articulate;
 But breathless with averted eyes elate
 She sits, with open lips and open ears,
 That it may call her twice. 'Mid doubts and
 fears

Thus oft my soul has hearkened; till the song,
 A central moan for days, at length found
 tongue,

And the sweet music welled and the sweet tears,
 But now, whatever while the soul is fain
 To list that wonted murmur, as it were
 The speech-bound sea-shell's low importunate
 strain, --

No breath of song, thy voice alone is there,
 O bitterly beloved! and all her gain
 Is but the pang of unpermitted prayer.

In "The Hill Summit," the evening light,
 and all it suggests, is deliciously rendered :

This feast day of the sun, his altar there
 In the broad west has blazed for vesper-song;
 And I have loitered in the vale too long
 And gaze now a belated worshipper.
 Yet may I not forget that I was ware,
 So journeying, of his face at intervals
 Transfigured where the fringed horizon falls, --
 A fiery bush with coruscating hair.
 And now that I have climbed and won this
 height,

I must tread downward through the sloping
 shade

And travel the bewildered tracks till night.
 Yet for this hour I still may here be stayed
 And see the gold air and the silver fade
 And the last bird fly into the last light.

In the last which I quote, "The One Hope," the poet rises to the high mystical altitude with which he is not unfamiliar :

When vain desire at last and vain regret
 Go hand in hand to death, and all is vain,
 What shall assuage the unforgetten pain
 And teach the unforgetful to forget?
 Shall Peace be still a sunk stream long unmet, --
 Or may the soul at once in a green plain
 Stoop through the spray of some sweet life-fountain?

And cull the dew-drenched flowering amulet ?
 Ah! when the wan soul in that golden air
 Between the scripted petals softly blown
 Peers breathless for the gift of grace unknown,
 Let no such joys as other souls count fair
 But only the one Hope's one name be there, --
 Not less nor more, but even that word alone.

Among the lyrical poems we have specimens of both the forms with which Mr. Browning has made us familiar — the per-

sonal and the dramatic. The former are of course simpler and slighter, and (with one or two exceptions to which I shall immediately allude) are arch, lively, and highly finished. "Sudden Light" is one of those consummate trifles which defy analysis.

I have been here before,
But when or how I cannot tell :
I know the grass beyond the door,
The sweet keen smell,
The sighing sound, the lights around the shore.

You have been mine before,—
How long ago I may not know :
But just when at that swallow's soar
Your neck turned so,
Some veil did fall, — I knew it all of yore.

Then, now, — perchance again !
O round mine eycs your tresses shake !
Shall we not lie as we have lain
Thus for Love's sake,
And sleep, and wake, yst never break the chain ?

This is handled with equal delicacy.

FIRST LOVE REMEMBERED.

Peace in her chamber, wheresoe'er
It be, a holy place :
The thought still brings my soul such grace
As morning meadows wear.

Whether it still be small and light,
A maid's who dreams alone,
As from her orchard-gate the moon
Its ceiling showed at night :

Or whether, in a shadow dense
As nuptial hymns invoke,
Innocent maidenhood awoke
To married innocence :

There still the thanks unheard await
The unconscious gift bequeathed ;
For there my soul this hour has breathed
An air inviolate.

"A Young Fir-Wood" is worthy of Peter Graham's canvas :

These little firs to-day are things
To clasp into a giant's cap,
Or fans to suit his lady's lap.
But many winters many springs
Shall cherish them in strength and sap,
Till they be marked upon the map,
A wood for the wind's wanderings.

All seed is in the sower's hands :
And what at first was trained to spread
Is shelter for some single head, —
Yea, even such fellowship of wands, —
May hide the sunset, and the shade
Of its great multitude be laid
Upon the earth and elder sands.

The exceptions to which I have alluded are "The Portrait" and "The Blessed

Damozel." Both of these appear to me to be very great and noble poems. Some of the stanzas in "The Portrait," such as —

This is her picture as she was :
It seems a thing to wonder on,
As though mine image in the glass
Should tarry when myself am gone.
I gaze until she seems to stir, —
Until mine eyes almost aver
That now, even now, the sweet lips part
To breathe the words of the sweet heart :—
And yet the earth is over her.

Alas ! even such the thin-drawn ray
That makes the prison-depths more rude, —
The drip of water night and day
Giving a tongue to solitude.
Yet this, of all love's perfect prize,
Remains; save what in mournful guise
Takes counsel with my soul alone, —
Save what is secret and unknown,
Below the earth, above the skies.

A deep dim wood; and there she stands
As in that wood that day : for so
Was the still movement of her hands
And such the pure line's gracious flow.
And passing fair the type must seem,
Unknown the presence and the dream.
'Tis she: though of herself, alas !
Less than her shadow on the grass
Or than her image in the stream.

That day we met there, I and she
One with the other all alone;
And we were blithe; yet memory
Saddens those hours, as when the moon
Looks upon daylight. And with her
I stooped to drink the spring-water,
Athirst where other waters sprang;
And where the echo is, she sang, —
My soul another echo there.

And as I wrought, while all above
And all around was fragrant air,
In the sick burthen of my love
It seemed each sun-thrilled blossom there
Beat like a heart among the leaves.
O heart that never beats nor heaves,
In that one darkness lying still,
What now to thee my love's great will
Or the fine web the sunshine weaves ?

For now doth daylight disavow
Those days, — nought left to see or hear.
Only in solemn whispers now
At night-time these things reach mine ear,
When the leaf-shadows at a breath
Shrink in the road, and all the heath,
Forest and water, far and wide,
In limpid starlight glorified,
Lie like the mystery of death —

could not easily be surpassed; but as a whole "The Blessed Damozel" is perhaps the most striking poem in the volume. It

displays in nearly every verse what I have called the highest faculty of the poet — the faculty of *imaginative vision* — combined with a certain homely and familiar pathos. This blessed soul looking down upon the earth from the ledge of heaven is strangely stirred with mortal passion, and

the clear-ranged unnumbered heads
Bowed with their aureoles,

are less to her than one sinful man whose tearless sorrow time cannot cure. The passages which are printed in italics (a vicious practice I admit) are those to which I would direct the special attention of the reader.

THE BLESSED DAMOZEL.

The blessed damozel leaned out
From the gold bar of Heaven;
Her eyes were deeper than the depth
Of waters stilled at even;
She had three lilies in her hand,
And the stars in her hair were seven.

Her robe, ungirt from clasp to hem,
No wrought flowers did adorn,
But a white rose of Mary's gift,
For service meetly worn;
Her hair that lay along her back
Was yellow like ripe corn.

Her seemed she scarce had been a day
One of God's choristers;
The wonder was not yet quite gone
From that still look of hers;
Albeit, to them she left, her day
Had counted ten years.

(To one, it is ten years of years.
Yet now, and in this place,
Surely she leaned o'er me — her hair
Fell all about my face. . . .
Nothing : the autumn fall of leaves,
The whole year sets apace.)

It was the rampart of God's house
That she was standing on;
By God built over the sheer depth
The which is Space begun;
So high, that looking downward thence
She scarce could see the sun.

It lies in Heaven across the flood
Of ether, as a bridge.
Beneath, the tides of day and night
With flame and darkness ridge
The void, as low as where this earth
Spins like a fretful midge.

Heard hardly, some of her new friends
Amid their loving games
Spake evermore among themselves
Their virginal chaste names;
And the souls mounting up to God
Went by her like thin flames.

And still she bowed herself and stooped
Out of the circling charm;
Until her bosom must have made
The bar she leaned on warm,
And the lilies lay as if asleep
Along her bended arm.

From the fixed place of Heaven she saw
Time like a pulse shake fierce
Through all the worlds. Her gaze still strove
Within the gulf to pierce
Its path; and now she spoke as when
The stars sang in their spheres.

The sun was gone now; *the curled moon*
Was like a little feather
Fluttering far down the gulf; and now
She spoke through the still weather.
Her voice was like the voice the stars
Had when they sang together.

(Ah sweet ! Just now, in that bird's song,
Strove not her accents there,
Fain to be harkened ? When those bells
Possessed the mid-day air,
Strove not her steps to reach my side
Down all the echoing stair ?)

“ I wish that he were come to me,
For he will come,” she said.
“ Have I not prayed in Heaven? — on earth,
Lord, Lord, has he not pray'd?
Are not two prayers a perfect strength
And shall I feel afraid ?

“ We two shall stand beside that shrine,
Occult, withheld, untrod,
Whose lamps are stirred continually
With prayer sent up to God;
And see our old prayers, granted, melt
Each like a little cloud.”

(*Alas ! We two, we two, thou say'st !*
Yea, one wast thou with me
That once of old. But shall God lift
To endless unity
The soul whose likeness with thy soul
Was but its love for thee ?)

“ We two,” she said, “ will seek the groves
Where the Lady Mary is,
With her five handmaidens, whose names
Are five sweet symphonies,
Cecily, Gertrude, Magdalen,
Margaret and Rosalys.

“ Herself shall bring us, hand in hand,
To Him round whom all souls
Kneel, *the clear-ranged unnumbered heads*
Bowed with their aureoles ;
And angels meeting us shall sing
To their citherns and citoles.

“ There will I ask of Christ the Lord
Thus much for him and me : —
Only to live as once on earth
With Love, — only to be,

As then awhile, for ever now
Together, I and he."

She gazed and listened and then said,
Less sad of speech than mild,—
" All this is when he comes." She ceased.
*The light thrilled towards her, fill'd
With angels in strong level flight.*
Her eyes prayed, and she smil'd.

(I saw her smile.) But soon their path
Was vague in distant spheres;
And then she cast her arms along
The golden barriers,
And laid her face between her hands,
And wept. (I heard her tears.)

Among the dramatic lyrics — lyrical in form, dramatic in principle — "Troy Town," "Eden Bower," "Ave," and "A Last Confession," are the most noticeable. In "Troy Town" the subtle malice of Venus is very delicately indicated; "Eden Bower" is the powerful but somewhat unpleasant conception of a serpent-woman; "A Last Confession" is a story of Italian love and Italian passion which might have been drawn by one of the old masters of tragedy. It contains the most charming bit of portraiture-painting in the volume. This is the heroine:

Yes, let me think of her as then; for so
Her image, Father, is not like the sights
Which come when you are gone. She had a
mouth

Made to bring death to life, — the underlip
Sucked in, as if it strove to kiss itself.
Her face was ever pale, as when one stooped
Over wan water; and the dark crisped hair
And the hair's shadow made it paler still:—
Deep-serried locks, the darkness of the cloud
When the moon's gaze is set in eddying gloom.
Her body bore her neck as the tree's stem
Bears the top branch; and as the branch sus-
tains

The flower of the year's pride, her high neck
bore
That face made wonderful with night and day.
Her voice was soft, yet ever the last words
Fell lingeringly; and rounded finger-tips
She had, that clung a little where they touched
And then were gone o' the instant. Her great
eyes,

That sometimes turned half dizzily beneath
The passionate lids, as faint, when she would
speak.

Had also in them hidden springs of mirth,
Which under the dark lashes evermore,
Shook to her laugh, as when a bird flies low
Between the water and the willow leaves,
And the shade quivers till he wins the light.

"Ave" is an effort to enter into the inner life of Mary, the mother of Christ — a highly imaginative piece of realism which contrasts curiously with the mediævalism of

"The Blessed Damozel," seeing that the one may be said to belong to the present, the other to a past that has grown mystical and ideal. I quote one or two of the verses:

AVE.

Mind'st thou not (when June's heavy breath
Warmed the long days in Nazareth),
That evé thou didst go forth to give
Thy flowers some drink that they might live
One faint night more amid the sands?
Far off the trees were as pale wands
Against the fervid sky: the sea
Sighed farther off eternally
As human sorrow sighs in sleep.
Then suddenly the awe grew deep,
As of a day to which all days
Were footsteps in God's secret ways:
Until a folding sense, like prayer,
Which is, as God is, everywhere,
Gathered about thee; and a voice
Spake to thee without any noise,
Being of the silence: — "Hail," it said,
"Thou that art highly favoured;
The Lord is with thee here and now;
Blessed among all women thou."

Ah! knew'st thou of the end, when first
That Babe was on thy bosom nurs'd? —
Or when He tottered round thy knee
Did thy great sorrow dawn on thee? —
And through His boyhood, year by year
Eating with Him the Passover,
Didst thou discern confusedly
That holier sacrament, when He,
The bitter cup about to quaff,
Should break the bread and eat thereof? —
Or came not yet the knowledge, even
Till on some day forecast in Heaven
His feet passed through thy door to press
Upon his Father's business? —
Or still was God's high secret kept?

Nay, but I think the whisper crept
Like growth through childhood. Work and
play,

Things common to the course of day,
Awed thee with meanings unfulfill'd;
And all through girlhood, something still'd
Thy senses like the birth of light,
When thou hast trimmed thy lamp at night
Or washed thy garments in the stream;
To whose white bed had come the dream
That He was thine and thou wast His
Who feeds among the field-lilies.
O solemn shadow of the end
In that wise spirit long contain'd!
O awful end! and those unsaid
Long years when It was Finished!

Soul, is it Faith, or Love, or Hope,
That lets me see her standing up
Where the light of the Throne is bright?
Unto the left, unto the right,
The cherubim, arrayed, conjoint,
Float inward to a golden point,

And from between the seraphim
The glory issues for a hymn.

Such lines as these last, and others in the "Blessed Damozel," to which I have alluded, remind me of some of the glorious designs with which David Scott added a new charm to the *Pilgrim's Progress* — especially to that last and mightiest effort of his pencil which represents the heavenly host, rank after rank, gathered round the throne of God — the innermost centre of light.

Mr. Rossetti's ballads are few in number, but really admirable in quality. "Stratton Water" is a singularly faithful reproduction of the old English and Scotch ballad form, both the measure and spirit being consistently preserved. The same may be said of "The Stag and Scrip," and of "Sister Helen," though a somewhat more "modern touch" (that more involved thoughtfulness from which a modern poet finds it so difficult to escape) may occasionally be detected in them, as in these stanzas from the former:

Her eyes were like the wave within;
Like water-reeds the poise
Of her soft body, dainty thin;
And like the water's noise
Her plaintive voice.

For him, the stream had never well'd
In desert tracts malign
So sweet; nor had he ever felt
So faint in the sunshine
Of Palestine.

Right so, he knew that he saw weep
Each night through every dream
The Queen's own face, confused in sleep
With visages supreme
Not known to him.

With the exception of "The Blessed Damozel," the most impressive poem in the volume is "Sister Helen." It is founded upon an old tradition of witchcraft, that a waxen figure or image may be so intimately associated with the person whom it represents, that the destruction or consumption of the one involves the decay and death of the other. The betrayed woman essays the terrible experiment. She melts her "waxen man" before the fire, and her false lover dies. A fierce and relentless irony pervades the piece, intensified by the weird refrain, the echo repeated from earth and heaven, as it were, of consuming hate and hopeless despair. Each scene is painted with surprising vividness (seeing that there is no direct narrative, but only the talk between brother and sister, and this weird wail adding its touch of grimness and reality to the successive incidents); first, the room in which the fatal fire begins to burn low, then

the clear moonlight high up in the windy balcony, then the sounds of the horses' hoofs and of men's voices outside entreating pity from the pitiless, and last the white form entering at the door which opens right away into the star-white visionary night. The space at my disposal will enable me to quote the opening and closing stanza only.

SISTER HELEN.

" Why did you melt your waxen man,
Sister Helen ?
To-day is the third since you began."

" The time was long, yet the time ran,
Little brother."

(O Mother, Mary Mother,
Three days to-day, between Hell and Heaven !)

" But if you have done your work aright,
Sister Helen,
You'll let me play, for you said I mi ght."
" Be very still in your play to-night,
Little brother."

(O Mother, Mary Mother,
Third night, to-night, between Hell and Heaven !)

" Oh the waxen knave was plump to-day,
Sister Helen;
How like dead folk he has dropped away !"
" Nay now, of the dead what can you say,
Little brother ?"

(O Mother, Mary Mother,
What of the dead, between Hell and Heaven ?)

" Now close your eyes, for they're sick and sore,
Sister Helen,
And I'll play without the gallery door."
" Ay, let me rest, — I'll lie on the floor,
Little brother."

(O Mother, Mary Mother,
What rest to-night, between Hell and Heaven ?)

" Here high up in the balcony,
Sister Helen,
The moon flies face to face with me."
" Ay, look and say whatever you see,
Little brother."

(O Mother, Mary Mother,
What sight to-night, between Hell and Heaven ?)

" Outside it's merry in the wind's wake,
Sister Helen;
In the shaken trees the chill stars shake."
" Hush, heard you a horse-tread as you spake,
Little brother ?"

(O Mother, Mary Mother,
What sound to-night, between Hell and Heaven ?)

" I hear a horse-tread, and I see,
Sister Helen,
Three horsemen that ride terribly."
" Little brother, whence come the three,
Little brother ? "

(*O Mother, Mary Mother,
Whence should they come, between Hell and
Heaven?*)

And then one by one the brothers and the father of the false Keith ride up, and passionately entreat her to have pity — in vain.

" Oh the wind is sad in the iron chill,
Sister Helen,
And weary sad they look by the hill."
" But Keith of Ewern's sadder still,
Little brother!"

(*O Mother, Mary Mother,
Most sad of all, between Hell and Heaven!*)

" See, see, the wax has dropped from its place,
Sister Helen,
And the flames are winning up space!"
" Yet here they burn but for a space,
Little brother!"

(*O Mary, Mary Mother,
Here for a space, between Hell and Heaven!*)

" Ah! what white thing at the door has cross'd,
Sister Helen?
Ah! what is this that sighs in the frost?"
" A soul that's lost as mine is lost,
Little brother!"

(*O Mother, Mary Mother,
Lost, lost, all lost, between Hell and Heaven!*)

The one or two narrative poems in the volume are hardly up to the level of this, or indeed of the more strictly lyrical portion of the volume in general; though "Dante in Verona" is a concise and picturesque sketch of the great poet's exile, and "Jenny" is a curious study — half scornful, half pitiful — of a life which upon the whole, perhaps, is best left unrecorded, so little can be made of it either by priest or poet. Yet some of the not least striking passages in the volume are to be found in this piece, as, for example, such as these:

Why, Jenny, you're asleep at last! —
Asleep, poor Jenny, hard and fast, —
So young and soft and tired; so fair,
With chin thus nestled in your hair,
Mouth quiet, eyelids almost blue
As if some sky of dreams shone through!

Just as another woman sleeps!
Enough to throw one's thoughts in heaps
Of doubt and horror, — what to say
Or think, — this awful secret sway,
The potter's power over the clay!
Of the same lump (it has been said)
For honor and dishonor made,
Two sister vessels. Here is one.

My cousin Nell is fond of fun,
And fond of dress, and change, and praise,
So mere a woman in her ways:
And if her sweet eyes rich in youth
Are like her lips that tell the truth,

My cousin Nell is fond of love.
And she's the girl I'm proudest of.
Who does not prize her, guard her well?
The love of change, in cousin Nell,
Shall find the best and hold it dear:
The unconquered mirth turn quieter
Not through her own, through others' woe:
The conscious pride of beauty glow
Beside another's pride in her,
One little part of all they share.
For Love himself shall ripen these
In a kind soil to just increase
Through years of fertilizing peace.

Of the same lump (as it is said)
For honor and dishonor made,
Two sister vessels. Here is one.

It makes a goblin of the sun.

So pure, — so fall'n! How dare to think
Of the first common kindred link?
Yet, Jenny, till the world shall burn
It seems that all things take their turn;
And who shall say but this fair tree
May need in changes that may be,
Your children's children's charity?
Scorned then, no doubt, as you are scorn'd!
Shall no man hold his pride forewarn'd
Till in the end, the Day of Days,
At Judgment, one of his own race,
As frail and lost as you, shall rise, —
His daughter, with his mother's eyes?

Fair shines the gilded aureole
In which our highest painters place
Some living woman's simple face.
And the stilled features thus described
As Jenny's long throat droops aside, —
The shadows where the cheeks are thin,
And pure wide curve from ear to chin, —
With Raffael's or Da Vinci's hand
To show them to men's souls, might stand,
Whole ages long, the whole world through,
For preachings of what God can do.
What has man done here? How atone,
Great God, for this which man has done?
And for the body and soul which by
Man's pitiless doom must now comply
With lifelong hell, what lullaby
Of sweet forgetful second birth
Remains? All dark. No sign on earth
What measure of God's rest endows
The many mansions of his house.

The reader has now some fair samples of these poems before him. He must judge for himself of their value. I have indicated briefly my own opinion. I think that Mr. Rosetti has proved that he possesses the supreme faculty of the poet — imaginative vision. Hence his coherence, directness, simplicity, concentration, and insight. There are other qualities no doubt which go to the making of a poet, but there is none higher, none rarer than that which enables him to present to us, without colour or met-

aphor, but in sharp, clear, and articulate outline—the emotion or idea in its simplest, most rudimentary, and most rigorously intellectual and spiritual aspect. This is what Mr. Rossetti has done; and what the highest order of poets alone can do.

From The Spectator.
AMONG MY BOOKS.*

A PLEASANT and a clever book; not full of fresh knowledge, but very full of happily expressed thought. Mr. Lowell, as a writer, has the gift generally specially assigned to the few really clever talkers; they are neither teaching nor learning, but are somehow placing common facts in a new setting, and half-consciously, half-unconsciously, saying fifty good things the listener will remember and probably repeat. Mr. Lowell, it is true, is very unequal; such writers or talkers commonly are. There are moments when they quite forget themselves in their subject, and fresh thought seems to sprout spontaneously, but at other times we are conscious that they are conscious that something is expected of them, it may be something quite out of their depth, and the mental strain is evident and ineffectual. But there is a keen intellectual pleasure in studying Mr. Lowell's criticism; he uses his scalpel so carefully, so almost tenderly, but then it has so keen an edge. We may open his book almost at random, and find scarcely a page which will not contain something fresh. Take this,—he is speaking of Lessing and of the deep debt we owe to German criticism:—“Hard as it is for a German to be clear, still harder to be light, he is more than ever awkward in his attempt to produce that quality of style so peculiarly French, which is neither wit nor liveliness taken singly, but a mixture of the two that must be drunk while the effervescence lasts, and will not bear exportation into any other language.” On the subtle irony of this:—“The Great Nation, as it cheerfully calls itself, is in nothing greater than in its talent for saying little things agreeably, which is perhaps the very top of mere culture, and in literature is the next best thing to the power of saying great things as easily as if they were little.” And who has not in some indefinite measure felt the force of this thought, that “German criticism, immeasurably superior to that of any other nation in its constructive faculty, in its instinct for

getting at whatever principle of life lies at the heart of a work of genius, is seldom lucid, almost never entertaining; it may turn its light into every obscurest cranny of its subject, but it never flashes light *out* of the subject itself.” And while still opening his book at his essay on Lessing, we might suggest how much about him Mr. Lowell contrives to tell in two short sentences. In one, when speaking of the range of pure scholarship Lessing had at his command while still so young, he says, “All through his life he was thoroughly German in this respect also, that he never quite smelted his knowledge clear from some slag of learning.” In the other, when mentioning the death of Lessing’s wife, “Lessing’s grief has that pathos which he praised in sculpture; he may writhe, but he must not scream.”

The first seventy pages of his work Mr. Lowell has devoted to Dryden, and is very much at home with his subject, so much at home, indeed, that he evidently thinks it needs no introduction, but chats on in the most easy and unconscious manner, till all that seems mere mummy about Dryden disappears from our cleared vision, and we find ourselves taking living interest in the man as well as his work, as we follow his critic through his appreciative but by no means eulogistic narrative. In Dryden’s prose, he observes, at one moment, “you come upon passages which persuade you he is a poet, in spite of his verse often turning State’s evidence against him.” And there is some truth, too, in the remark that “he was the lock which let our language down from its point of highest poetry to its level of easiest and most gently flowing prose.” In contrasting his style at one point with Jeremy Taylor’s, such a deliciously quaint yet true morsel of criticism comes in. After quoting a passage from Taylor, he says, “How unpremeditated it all seems, how carelessly he knots each new thought as it comes to the one before it, with an *and*, like a girl making lace!” He gives us many of Dryden’s happiest sayings, among them his reason for avoiding in rhyme the narrow banks of the couplet, first running over into a triplet, and, even then uncontrollable, rising to an alexandrine. Dryden observes, “The thought can turn itself with greater ease in a larger room, when the rhyme comes too thick upon us it straitens the expression. It makes a poet giddy with turning in a space too narrow for his imagination.” But Mr. Lowell, though his satire is never unkindly in its keenness, can scarcely criticize Dryden as a poet, however grave he may study to appear, without our being conscious his hand is before his

* Six Essays. By James Russell Lowell, A.M. London: Macmillan and Co. 1870.

mouth. "Dear Dr. Johnson!" he exclaims, after quoting some of Dryden's proses and verses, "dear Dr. Johnson had his doubts about Shakespeare, but this is poetry," but if he at least denies that Dryden is a poet's poet, he gives his prose full measure of praise. "Amid the rickety sentiment looming big through misty phrases," he writes, "which marks so much of modern literature, to read him is as bracing as a north-west wind. His phrase is always a short cut to his sense, for his estate was too spacious for him to need that trick of winding the path of his thought about, and planting it out with clumps of epithet, by which the landscape-gardeners of literature give to a paltry half-acre the air of a park." It is a valuable hour which further on Mr. Lowell induces us to spend with Shakespeare and himself. When we first perceived his intention to add one more to the innumerable band of Shakespeare's critics, we confess we paused on the threshold of inquiry; the critic's critic has no easy task in such a case, and visions of new readings, distorted meanings, a weary maze of mere scholarship choking the clear sense of many a passage, rose up before us, but we were most agreeably disappointed. We have met with nothing of the sort, and we commend this essay, without reserve, to the attention of any student of Shakespeare; it will send him back with fresh zest to his work. Our space forbids our analyzing much of the criticism, but there are sentences here and there we cannot pass wholly by. In commenting on the English tongue as Shakespeare found it, Mr. Lowell observes, with absolute truth, that he found words ready to his use, original, untarnished; types of thought, whose sharp edges were unworn by repeated impressions; a living language, by which, he says, hs by no means implies what is technically so called, but a language still hot from the hearts and brains of a people, not hardened yet, but moltenly ductile to new shapes of sharp and clear relief in the moulds of new thought; it is, he adds further on, "when expression has become an act of memory instead of unconscious necessity, that diction takes the place of warm and hearty speech;" and observes, still speaking of Shakespeare, "it was fortunate for him he came upon an age when our language was at its best; but it was fortunate also for us, because our costliest poetic phrase is put beyond the reach of decay, in the gleaming precipitate in which it united itself with his thought." Certainly, Mr. Lowell himself is wonderfully free from what he aptly calls "the obscurity of mist rising from undrained shallows of the mind." His thought, how-

ever subtle, rises clear to the reader's apprehension, and there is a terseness and condensed strength in his sentences which make so much he says worth re-reading. There are whole pages on the nature of Shakespeare's influence worth careful study, but in this case to epitomize is to destroy. There is, however, one sentence on the study of the ideal which we would like to commend to the attention of some of our modern artists. "The true ideal is not opposed to the real, nor is it in any artificial heightening thereof, but lies in it, and blessed are the eyes that find it!" So true it is,

"Minds that have nothing to confer
Find little to perceive."

In the next essay Mr. Lowell has changed his attitude altogether, and half-historian, half-humourist, gives us a sketch of New England two centuries ago; and, looked at from the outside, as he tells us, few histories could be more unpicturesque; its very smallness and nearness made its details seem so petty, "the homespun fates of Cephas and Prudence repeated in an infinite series." And yet a little nearer and closer inspection still, and it was not difficult to foresee that that homely planting was destined to take root downward and bear fruit upward through the length and breadth of the land. "We have," says Mr. Lowell, "the noise of the axe and hammer and saw, an apotheosis of dogged work, where reversing the fairy tale, nothing is left to luck; and if there be any poetry, it is something which cannot be helped, the waste of water over the dam." But one thought was deeply imbedded in those Puritan fathers, and whatever has been its outcome, it has never for a moment perished. "They were the first lawgivers who saw clearly and enforced practically the simple moral and political truth, that knowledge was not an aim to be dependent on the chance charity of private men or the precarious pittance of a trust-fund, but a sacred debt which the Commonwealth owed to every one of her children." What an amount of narrowness might we not forgive to the policy which enclosed such a kernel! With a pardonable pride Mr. Lowell continues, "The first row of tram-mels and pothooks which the little Shearja-shubs and Elkanahs blotted and blubbered across their copy-books was the preamble to the Declaration of Independence;" but he warns us against confounding the Puritanism of the third with that of the fifth decade of the seventeenth century, for there came a moment when the religious element decayed, and of how the form remained when the

spirit was gone we may have many incidents here. The following is one. The difficulty of getting domestic help perplexes the Puritan mind, and the remedy suggested is written by Emanuel Downing to Winthrop:—

"A warr with the Narraganset," he writes to Winthrop in 1645, "is verie considerable to this plantation, for I doubt whither it be not synne in us, having power in our hands, to suffer them to maynteyne the worship of the devill, which their paw-wawes often doe; 2lie, If upon a just warre the Lord should deliver them into our hands, wee might easly have men, women & children enough to exchange for Moores, which wilbe more gayneful pillage for us than wee conceive, for I doe not see how wee can thrive untill wee getto into a stock of slaves sufficient to do all our business, for our children's children will hardly see this great Continent filled with people, soe that our servants will desire freedome to plant for them selves, & not stay but for verie great wages. And I suppose you know verie well how wee shall maynteyne 20 Moores cheaper than one Englishe servant."

"The doubt," says Mr. Lowell, "whether it be not sin in us longer to tolerate their devil-worship, considering *how much need we have of them as merchandise, is deliciouſ!*" And so the common preface, which in its beginning had been so full of meaning, begins about this time to glide off, and we have a demand for a good share in slave spoils, beginning,—"Sir, Mr. Endecott and myself salute you, in the Lord Jesus, &c. We have heard of a dividence of women and children in the bay, and would bee glad of a share." The *et cætera* is not unsuggestive; it was a laying-down of the weapons with which the battle had been won. "Aspiration," says our author, "sees only one side of the question, possession many. A sceptre once put into the hand, the grip is instinctive, and he who is firmly seated in authority soon learns to think security, not progress, the highest lesson of statecraft. And so it was," he says, "that the English Puritans had carried a political end by means of a religious revival; the fulcrum on which they rested their lever to overturn the existing order of things was in the soul of man. They could not renew the fiery gush of enthusiasm when once the molten lead had begun to stiffen in the mould of policy and precedent."

As a picture, not of New England alone, but, by a natural reflex glance, of England too, during this transition time, nothing can be better than Mr. Lowell's sketch. Unlike his other essays, it is tintured with national peculiarities, which only lend a more life-like touch to his special subject.

From The Pall Mall Gazette.
FRENCH LUNATICS.

Two recent cases of persons confined as lunatics without it being altogether clear whether they were really insane or not, have set Frenchmen asking the very pertinent question, "What is a lunatic?" and have drawn public attention on the other side of the Channel to the extreme elasticity of French law with respect to madmen, or those who are supposed to be so. The question as to who are mad and who are not must always be a delicate one to decide, for it is evident that the definition of a lunatic will, to a certain extent, vary according to custom and country. The excitable Frenchman who last winter refused to pay his taxes on the ground that he was a Radical, and, on a public subscription being raised to buy back the cow which the collector had seized, wrote grandly to the *Marseillaise* to say he accepted the cow in trust for the Republic, might very possibly in England have been considered a madman; while, on the other hand, it is certain that our own "Peculiar People," who let their families die for want of medicine, and then quote the New Testament in justification of the proceeding, might—and probably would—in France, be shut up and straitwaistcoated without finding a single voice raised to offer any objection. On the whole, however, it may be affirmed that Frenchmen allow themselves more latitude in defining lunatics than we in this country do. A Frenchman may do more, say more, and write more without being deemed out of his senses than an Englishman can; and so long as he coveres his vagaries with the pretence of being a political theorist, there are no lengths in extravagance and folly to which he may not go, and yet be held a very deep thinker by a large section of the public. This being so, one is naturally led to ask how it happens that we so frequently hear of men being confined in France without being any madder than three-fourths of their countrymen. The two most recent instances of suspicious incarceration are not the only ones by many that have occurred of late years. Two sessions ago the Opposition in the Corps Législatif called attention to the arbitrary confinement of three or four persons, one of whom, an officer perfectly sane and intelligent, had been kept six years in an asylum by a general notoriously his wife's paramour; and another of whom had been thrown into Bicêtre for no other reason than that, being one of the heroes of the Boulogne expedition of 1840, he had persisted in thinking himself entitled to the Legion of Honour, and had written five

or six different times to high personages to urge his claims to that decoration. There was also the famous case of the barrister Sandon, who was shut up on a certificate of Dr. Tardieu, for annoying M. Billault, and who, it is now acknowledged, was no madder on the day when he was put into Charenton than on the day when, M. Billault having died, he was lucky enough to get out again.

That such tampering with the liberty of sane men should be possible would seem a very alarming circumstance in countries where individual freedom is regarded as the most sacred and important of rights; but somehow it does not appear to produce much disquieting effect upon Frenchmen. Recently there was a little excitement about two gentlemen who were confined, as it is alleged, unjustly; and most of the papers have been advocating a reform of the existing lunacy laws. But the excitement is after all of a rather tame sort, and the papers show none of that angry determination which, it may be safely asserted, the English press would evince if agitating in a similar contingency. The fact is Frenchmen do not understand individual liberty as we do, for they have never possessed it. In a country where any man may be arrested on a groundless charge and kept in solitary confinement for three or four months before he is publicly arraigned to prove his innocence, it is scarcely possible that people should be over-sensitive on the score of personal freedom. Arrest a Frenchman and shut him up as a lunatic, and you may be sure that nine-tenths of his friends will advise him when he gets out to thank heaven that he is free and to hold his peace. If, however, he should be an obstinate man and bent on revenge, he may bring an action at law against his persecutors, and get a few of the Liberal papers to say a kind word for him: but the propensity to laugh at everything is so incurable in France that, unless the case be one of peculiar heartlessness, the victim will find the large majority of the public disposed to turn him into ridicule, especially if—as in the affair of M. le Puyparlier—it is his own wife that has locked him up as a madman.

Such as they are, the present lunacy laws in France date no further back than 1838. Previously to that time the most correct definition of a lunatic would have been, a person unfortunate enough to quarrel with somebody more powerful than himself. Under the old régime, when the Bastile existed, and *lettres de cachet* were in vogue, a nobleman, desirous of getting rid of a troublesome enemy or an importunate rela-

tive, had no occasion to accuse him of madness. He simply asked a friend at court for an order of imprisonment, and the relative or enemy was locked up until further notice. Voltaire, d'Alembert, Diderot, and Mirabeau (when he was young) were all confined for a time in this way; the last at the request of his own father, who kept him in prison several years, and then was quite surprised to find that his son treated him coldly and with aversion. At the Revolution, however, the Bastile disappeared, and when Napoleon came to power with his famous Code, there was no means of spiriting away a disagreeable antagonist but by having him confined as a madman. In the published correspondence of the Emperor, one is continually coming across such passages as this (in a letter to M. Bigot de Préameneu, Ministre des Cultes):—"I am informed that there is a priest at Blois who lately offered up public prayers for the Count de Provence. You must have him shut up until he has regained his senses." And this, again, in a letter to M. Fouché, Minister of Police:—"Je ne veux plus que la licence de la presse aille jusqu'à dénigrer notre gloire militaire. Il y a un journaliste à Lyon qui s'est permis d'attaquer l'armée. Il faut enfermer cet homme. C'est un fou." The future Prime Minister, Polignac, and his brother, were shut up during ten years of Napoleon's reign in a private madhouse; General Malet, the leader of the conspiracy of the 23rd of October, 1812, escaped from a lunatic asylum to try the sort of *coup d'état* which resulted in his being shot; and Mme. de Staél, when banished, received warning that if she tried to re-enter France she would be thrown for the rest of her life into a maison de santé. Soon after the return of the Bourbons (1817) a report, addressed to Louis XVIII. by M. Decazes, stated that three thousand seven hundred royalists, unjustly confined as lunatics by the "usurper," had been set free since 1815; and deep was the indignation of the public at hearing of the ill-treatment suffered by these unfortunates. But, to do the Bourbons justice, they lost no time in retaliating. Hundreds of officers who, at the fall of Napoleon, had refused to take service under the new Sovereign, and had retired on half-pay to small country towns, were thrown into madhouses by prefects anxious to display their zeal. A word inadvertently spoken in a café or a slight offered to some insignificant jack-in-office was sufficient. In the middle of the night the offender would be arrested on a certificate signed by a prison doctor, and once within the four walls of an asylum there was no hope of escape but

through death, flight, or a political revolution.

On the accession of Louis Philippe, when the nation, in the first flush of its joy at having dethroned Charles X., was clamouring for reforms of every possible and impossible kind, one of the first subjects forced on the attention of Government was that of a new lunacy law. Publishers' shelves were teeming with pamphlets and memoirs by people who had been locked up as madmen during the late reign, and the King showed as much anxiety as any of his subjects to render arbitrary incarcerations thenceforth impossible. What with parliamentary commissions, however, and the interminable course of speech-making that has to be gone through before an injustice can be remedied in a constitutional country, nothing was done until eight years later, when a measure, at that time considered radical and perfect, was introduced into the Chamber of Deputies and passed through the two Houses. By the terms of the new law nobody could be shut up without a certificate from two doctors, one of whom was to be the doctor of the asylum where the alleged lunatic was to be confined. Every asylum, public and private, was moreover subjected to quarterly visits from a Procureur du Roi, and a terrific scale of penalties was proclaimed against those who locked up sane people, or who in any way rendered themselves accessory to such an act by ill-treating or simply refusing to liberate a man proved to be of sound mind.* Now this law may have been effective enough during the reign of Louis Philippe, which was a time of freedom; and it might be effective again should the somewhat problematical "Empire Libéral" be ever established; but it has certainly not been effective during the nineteen years that have elapsed since 1851. The best proof that can be adduced of this is the enormous use made of *maisons de santé*, or madhouses, by French fathers who want to bring unruly children to obedience. Nothing is more common in France than for a father, who has a scapegrace son, or a daughter inclined to marry a young gentleman of slender means, to ask the family doctor to sign a certificate to the effect that the offending young person is suffering "from excitement of the brain, and needs rest." This is quite enough to open the doors of a *maison de santé*, and the son or daughter, as the case may be, is confined until a disposition to be dutiful has been developed. It is

quite impossible to make ordinary Frenchmen understand to what abuses this practice may lead. If appealed to on the subject they, answer that many a boy and girl have been saved from ruin by a few months of timely confinement, and there can be no doubt that there is a certain amount of truth in this. But, looking at the matter from another point of view, it is evident that the facility for locking up a refractory son must often extend to the locking up of other relatives, and that husbands and wives, for instance, may not unfrequently persuade the family doctor that their consorts are "labouring under brain excitement, and have need of rest." In the matter of the existing lunacy laws, as in a good many other cases, the French have been deluded into accepting a flash and high-coloured but empty measure, in the belief that it was good and genuine. The terms penal servitude, imprisonment for life, penalty of death, &c., sound very well as threatened against persons who shut up sane folk; but what do they mean? The scope of every good lunacy law should be preventive, not repressive. It is all very well to cut off the head of a mad-doctor if an individual whom he has illegally confined and maltreated can prove these facts (which, by the way, he never can); but the proper course would be to render it impossible that any individual should be so shut up and maltreated. It is true that the madhouses are inspected now, which sixty years ago they were not, and that a person illegally confined has therefore a privilege which was denied to many of his predecessors in bondage — that of having a State official come every three months to look at him. But is this much of a consolation? The inspectors who visit madhouses see several thousands of lunatics every month, and from nine-tenths of these unfortunate persons they hear the same story. If a sane man appeals to them for release they have very few means of distinguishing him from others, the more so as a reasonable man unjustly confined is usually much more excited than a genuine lunatic. It is to be hoped that these facts will end by forcing themselves upon the attention of M. Emile Ollivier when he has done with the plebiscitum, the splits in the Cabinet, the trial of the February conspirators, and other small matters, which are making his life uncomfortable. If he succeeds in giving his countrymen a humane set of lunacy laws, he will have done more for the real principle of liberty than any of his forerunners have done. For, though a free press and free right of meeting are excellent things, there is a thing better still, which

* The penalty of death was imposed in cases where the owner of a madhouse, knowing a man to be sane, received him, kept him more than three months, and subjected him to acts of cruelty.

is to be free from dread at the sight of one's family doctor, and to have no reason for apprehending lest that useful friend should be induced to declare on paper that one "has need of a little rest."

From The Pall Mall Gazette.

THE STATURE AND BULK OF MAN IN THE BRITISH ISLES.

DR. BEDDOES, president of the Anthropological society of London, has produced a reprint of a memoir on this subject read before that learned body, which has so much more of practical interest than is the case with its speculations in general that we feel warranted in recommending it strongly to the notice of our readers. The topic is one which interests or arouses a very large class of observers, and we must add that there is none on which more rash and superficial speculation is commonly vented. Every one, generally speaking, has some pet notion of his own about districts in which the race of man is above or below the average in height or strength, and as to occupations which tend to encourage or depress physical development. Nothing can serve better than the contents of this volume to correct such hasty generalizations and communicate a few stable ideas. It is, in truth, a kind of handbook of the subject. Dr. Beddoes has set to work by carefully measuring and weighing as many men between the ages of twenty-three and fifty as he could collect in each several locality; or, where this could not be accomplished, by availing himself of the assistance of friends. He has supplemented this inquiry by other examinations of special classes—recruits, criminals, lunatics. But these side investigations, though curious enough in their results, we shall leave unnoticed for the present, and content ourselves with the main purport of the treatise.

The pursuit of knowledge was in this case by no means unattended with difficulties. Men could not conceive with what intent, except a sinister one, they were made to undergo the process of measuring and weighing by a doctor. In canny Scotland the least amount of difficulty was found. But "the fishermen of some villages on the east coast proved extremely stubborn and suspicious." In Ireland "the unsettled political condition of the country proved an insuperable obstacle to those who made attempts on my behalf. Some Tipperary boys fairly took to their heels when it was proposed to measure them!" In Wales

"there was unusual difficulty in disabusing the natives of the idea that the inquiry had been set on foot by Government, and therefore *must* mean mischief." In England there was less of suspicious or superstitious opposition, but more of downright "stupidity." Under these impediments, and, moreover, what Dr. Beddoes justly calls the "intrinsic difficulties" of the inquiry, the work was, no doubt, very imperfectly done. Many inductions seemed formed on a meagre amount of cases. The whole must be taken as a "tentamen," rather than an experiment carefully worked out. But, with this preliminary caution, we may safely use, as far as it will go, the knowledge thus acquired.

Dr. Beddoes' line of march proceeds from north to south. Beginning at the first extremity, he finds the Scottish Highlanders, "as a rule, a tall and bulky race"—which is not, we should suppose, the character assigned to them in common report. But they vary very greatly in different districts. In some western islands (such as Lewis and Harris) they are rather short; in others (Mull, for instance,) more than usually tall. The people of the western Lowlands (Ayrshire and Galloway) exceed all others in height, and indeed rank first among the inhabitants of the British Islands. The men of the Eastern Border and the Merse very nearly equal them in stature, and exceed them in weight, being, on the whole, the great men among Queen Victoria's British subjects. The average Berwickshire farmer or peasant, out of the number examined, was found to measure five feet eleven inches and nearly a third, and to weigh nearly 200 lb. This is the *ne plus ultra*. The people of Aberdeenshire, and of other parts of the eastern coast, do not, however, fall behind. These are the stalwart natives who justify the Scottish lady's retort on Dr. Johnson's definition of oats as "the food of horses in England and of men in Scotland." "Yes, and where will you find such horses and such men?" The average height of man throughout Scotland is estimated, somewhat conjecturally, at five feet seven inches and a half.

The Borderers on the English side, and generally speaking the agricultural inhabitants of our northern counties, are a tall race, like their neighbours. Lancashire seems to constitute an exception, which we are rather surprised to learn—the people being as low or lower than those of England "generally;" and this not only in the cotton region. Good stature prevails generally as far south as the Trent, or

rather the Wash, for Lincolnshire comes within the category. The Trent once passed, the conditions alter. Tallness becomes exceptional, though found, among other tracts, in Leicestershire and Northamptonshire; "but we are now coming to the frontier of undersized men." Exception must also be made for parts of Norfolk and of Kent, secluded districts on the sea coast, inhabited by local breeds of comparative giants. But Suffolk men are short, though rather heavy, after the model of their own celebrated breed of horses. And the home and southern counties generally fall not only far below the north, but below the general national standard. It is very possible that this diminution of size may have been partly produced by the constant drain — not recent, as in the north, but for a long course of centuries of the choice specimens of the race towards the great metropolis, leaving those of inferior type in possession of the grounds. The men of Wales are, on the whole, short, but "with a bulk more than proportionate;" average, a little over 5 ft. 6 in. In the south-west of England stature is low, until Cornwall is reached. There, all at once, we seem to strike on a new type of men; a tall and big-boned race, average 5 ft. 7 1-4 in.; "and even this standard is clearly exceeded by the people of Scilly, whose proportions certainly give the lie to the current notion that men and quadrupeds must degenerate in small islands." We should rather say that this remarkable instance is of importance in disproof of the general doctrine, very hastily assumed for the most part, that "breeding in and in" tends necessarily to deteriorate the human race. Evidence on the subject varies; but on the whole, it seems that remote and secluded tribes, in which intermarriage of relations must needs be frequent, are better gifted *au physique* than those more mixed. Such seems to be the result of Dr. Beddoes' observations as to some Highland districts; as to "Flegg," in the north-eastern part of Norfolk; as to the Isle of Romney; and especially as to Scilly, where any one who wants to marry at all must almost inevitably marry a cousin. We might add, from popular opinion, the so-called Isles of Purbeck and Portland; but these are not tabu-

lated in the book before us. The average height of Englishmen Dr. Beddoes fixes, not very confidently, at 5 ft. 6 1-2 in. That of Irishmen is much the same; but (an odd singularity) they exhibit "greater uniformity of stature." As regards weight, he allows the Scotchman 155lb., the Englishman 145, the Irishman 138; but owns that he is not satisfied with the sufficiency of his induction.

We must omit Dr. Beddoes' speculation on the effect of ancestral race on stature, more curious in our view than conclusive; and we have not space to comment on what will be generally regarded as the most important part of his speculations — that which concerns differences of stature and bulk according to rank, means, and occupation. The leading fact of all seems undeniable, and it is only too discouraging. His returns do but confirm the received and well-founded opinion that populations which follow agricultural and other out-of-door employments are the tallest and strongest; whether also the healthiest is a question which these returns do not touch, but concerning which there is probably but little doubt. As regards thews and sinews, man degenerates in towns, degenerates in crowded centres of industry, degenerates in sedentary occupations. "The physical differences between country folk and townsfolk are," says our author, "the most important ones developed in my tables. . . . It may be taken as *proved* that the stature of man in the large towns of Britain is lowered considerably below the standard of the nation, and as *probable* that such degradation is hereditary and progressive." This, it may be remembered, as regards the mere difference between town and country life, does not exactly agree with the conclusions arrived at by Quetelet and others through comparing the stature of the people of Brussels and other cities with that of the neighbouring Belgian peasantry. But Dr. Beddoes treats these as exceptional, and we fear he is right. The prospect is not hopeful one, in an age in which cities are rapidly growing and rural districts losing their population. We can only rely on the progress of sanitary reform, which has certainly not said its "last word" on the subject.

A MILK MUSHROOM.—M. Heeling states, in the *Journal de Pharmacie et de Chimie*, that even long before milk becomes sour there are generated in it very small organized spores of an Ascophora species.

No people ever had a stronger faith in immortality than the Celts. One could borrow money of them, to be repaid in the other world. Pious Christian usurers should look at themselves in this mirror.

From Nature.

NOVEL TELEGRAPHY—ELECTRIFICATION
OF AN ISLAND.

A CURIOUS discovery has been made by Mr. Gott, the superintendent of the French company's telegraph station at the little island of St. Pierre Miquelon. There are two telegraph stations on the island. One, worked in connection with the Anglo-American company, receives messages from Newfoundland and sends them on to Sydney, using for the latter purpose a powerful battery and the ordinary Morse signals.

The second station is worked by the French Transatlantic Company, and is furnished with exceedingly delicate receiving instruments, the invention of Sir William Thomson, and used to receive messages from Brest and Duxbury. These very sensitive instruments were found to be seriously affected by earth-currents; i.e., currents depending on some rapid changes in the electrical condition of the island; these numerous changes caused currents to flow in and out of the French company's cables, interfering very much with the currents indicating true signals. This phenomenon is not an uncommon one, and the inconvenience was removed by laying an insulated wire about three miles long back from the station to the sea, in which a large metal plate was immersed; this plate is used in practice as the earth of the St. Pierre station, the changes in the electrical condition or potential of the sea being small and slow, in comparison with those of the dry rocky soil of St. Pierre. After this had been done, it was found that part of the so-called earth-currents had been due to the signals sent by the American company into their own lines, for when the delicate receiving instrument was placed between the earth at the French station and the earth at the sea, so as to be in circuit with the three miles of insulated wire, the messages sent by the rival company were clearly indicated, so clearly indeed, that they have been automatically recorded by Sir William Thomson's sphyphon recorder.

It must be clearly understood that the

American lines come nowhere into contact, or even into the neighbourhood of the French line. The two stations are several hundred yards apart, and yet messages sent at one station are distinctly read at the other station; the only connection between the two being through the earth; and it is quite clear that they would be so received and read at fifty stations in the neighbourhood all at once. The explanation is obvious enough: the potential of the ground in the neighbourhood of the stations is alternately raised and lowered by the powerful battery used to send the American signals. The potential of the sea at the other end of the short insulated line remains almost if not wholly unaffected by these, and thus the island acts like a sort of great Leyden jar, continually charged by the American battery, and discharged in part through the short insulated French line. Each time the American operator depresses his sending key, he not only sends a current through his lines, but electrifies the whole island, and this electrification is detected and recorded by the rival company's instruments.

No similar experiment could be made in the neighbourhood of a station from which many simultaneous signals were being sent; but it is perfectly clear that unless special precautions are taken at isolated stations, an inquisitive neighbour owning a short insulated wire might steal all messages without making any connection between his instrument and the cable or land line. Stealing messages by attaching an instrument to the line was a familiar incident in the American War; but now messages may be stolen with perfect secrecy by persons who nowhere come within a quarter of a mile of the line. Luckily, the remedy is simple enough.

All owners of important isolated stations should use earth-plates at sea, and at sea only. This plan was devised by Mr. C. Varley many years ago to eliminate what we may term natural earth-currents, and now it should be used to avoid the production of artificial earth-currents which may be improperly made use of.

FLEEMING JENKIN.

A TALE OF A TRUMPET.—At one of the entertainments recently given to the Duke of Edinburgh in India, an old lady was present, who, being afflicted with deafness, carried an ear-trumpet. She had occasion to summon one of the table-servants, who was carrying a dish of

peas, and put up her trumpet to hear his reply to her question. The unlucky *Khitmutgar*, misunderstanding her wishes, instantly transferred a bountiful helping of peas to the open mouth of her acoustic instrument.

The Graphic.